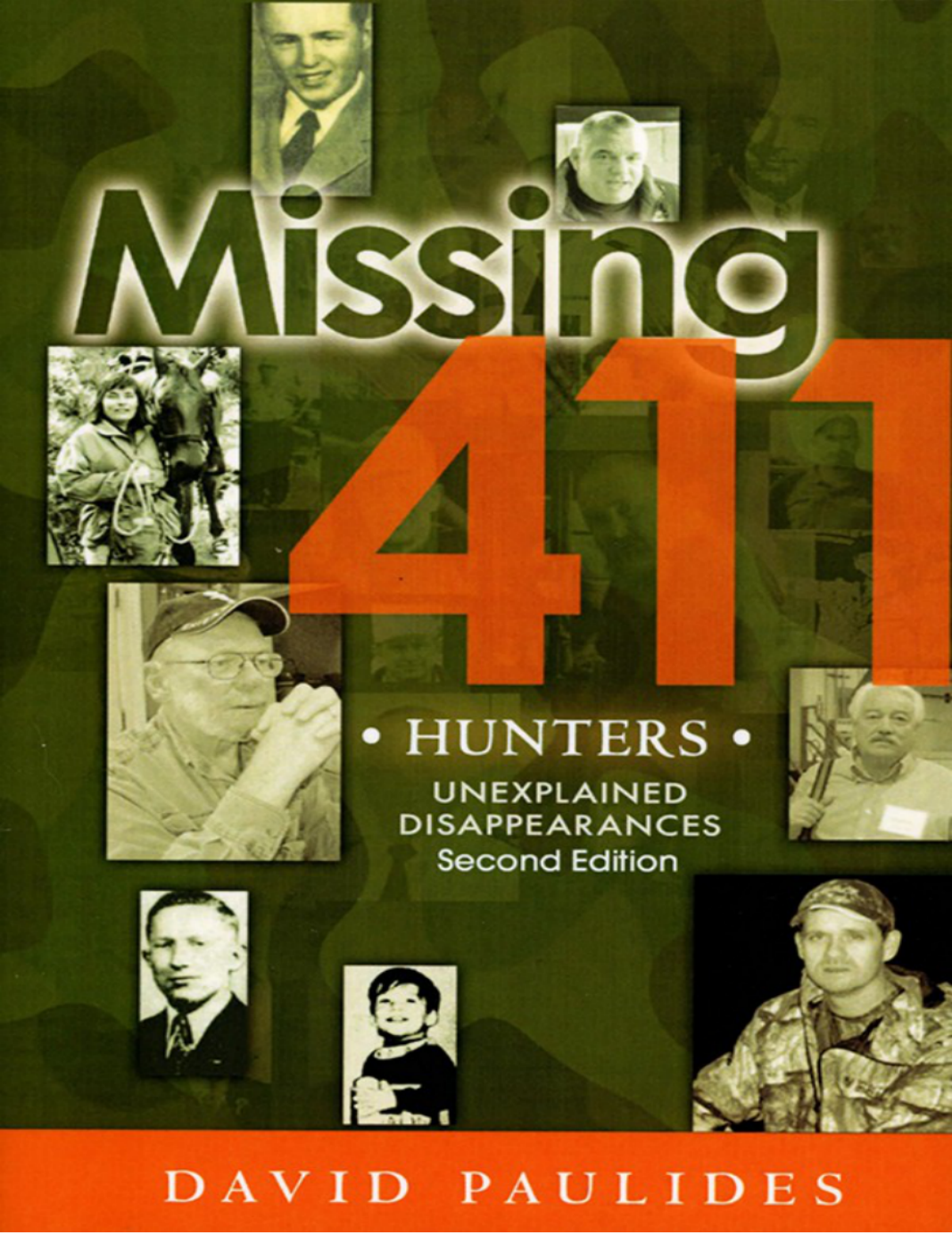
Missing
411
• HUNTERS •
UNEXPLAINED
DISAPPEARANCES
Second Edition
DAVID PAULIDES

Missing

411

Hunters

SECOND EDITION

DAVID PAULIDES

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ISBN:1530946379

ISBN 13:9781530946372

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016905813 LCCN Imprint Name: City and State (If

applicable)

ABBREVIATIONS

ATV All-Terrain Vehicle

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation

FOIA Freedom of Information Act

PLS Point Last Seen

RCMP Royal Canadian Mounted Police

SAR Search-and-Rescue

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The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.

H. P. Lovecraft

INTRODUCTION

Lil start with a quote from this January 29, 1931, article in the Muscatine Journal and News Tribune. I was researching a missing person case and read this; it could've come out of any of my books:

But this mysterious disappearance called to mind the fact that men and women have been stepping into vacua for years just as mysteriously and just as thoroughly.

News files of recent years are filled with repetitions of the ancient theme. These stories make first pages for a few days, then, as no developments come, are relegated inside, eventually to be dropped as some new mystery comes to the front.

The reporter, Mr. Charles Honce, could not have stated it better. The number of disappearances, the repetition of facts, and the ongoing nature of the missing make this an issue that has been happening for centuries, maybe since man first started to walk our earth.

Background

This is the sixth book in the Missing 411 series. It has taken us six years to get to this point in understanding specific profile points found in these cases. This book does not contain a list of all hunters that have vanished. The book contains stories of missing hunters and their companions that have vanished under specific profile points that I have established after years of profiling and research. If this is the first Missing 411 book you are reading, it might be wise to put it down and read one of the three first books: Missing 411: Western United States, Missing 411: Eastern United States, or Missing 411: North America and Beyond.

The majority of cases in this book are new to the Missing 411 series. I have taken some of the hunters' stories from past books and included them here.

Profile Points

Canine Cannot Find a Scent

In nearly 99% of the cases I have documented, Bloodhounds brought to the point where the victim was last seen cannot find a scent, aren't interested in tracking, or seem oblivious to the scent. As a former member of a law enforcement SWAT team that had the canine unit attached to our division, I can guarantee that these dogs love their job and relish tracking people. When I first came across the anomaly of dogs not finding a scent or not willing to follow, I thought it might be an isolated issue. This is one of the most prevalent profile points in the cases we have identified.

Weather

In the vast majority of the cases highlighted in the eight books, the weather has a significant impact on the rescue or recovery of the victim. The weather seems to take a turn for the worse just as the person is going missing or just after they disappeared. Lousy weather includes blizzards, fog, rain, snow, hail, dust storms, extremely cold and hot temperatures. When you first start to read about this, your natural reaction is that it's bad luck. After reading eight books and seeing the scenario replicate itself time after time, you'll be stunned.

Victims Found in an Area Previously Searched

In Missing 411: The Devil's in the Detail, I present a table showing dozens of cases where the missing person was found in an area that was previously searched. Sometimes the location of the recovery had been searched dozens of times. In one instance, the searchers had

taken the same trail hundreds of times over the week hiking to where they believed the victim was located. On one of those days of the search, a tree had fallen across the path, and the young victim was found lying on it. Nobody could explain the perplexing scenario. In Missing 411: A Sobering Coincidence, I presented many cases where a body of water was searched by remote vehicles, divers, etc. and then the victim was found precisely where searchers had just left. Many readers have stated that it appears the victim has been placed there to be located. In the past few years, we have been told by other researchers that they think the people were dropped into place to be found. Nobody ever observes the victims arriving into the area. How the victims got to the space where they are eventually located is one of the most perplexing issues.

Missing Clothes or Shoes

Often the victims are found without shoes or missing pieces of clothing. It doesn't matter the type of climate; this has been documented in all kinds of weather. There have been people who have never read the books that make claims that this is due to hypothermia. The issue with that is that there are many small children that are located missing clothing and their parents state that they could not remove their clothes. In other instances, on a warm afternoon, a person disappears. Hundreds of yards from the location he or she was last seen, searchers find a pile of clothing: The victim didn't have the time to get to the hypothermia state, yet all of their clothes had been removed. You will read stories in this book where clothing and shoes had been removed under highly unusual circumstances.

Time of Disappearance The vast majority of disappearances occur in the late afternoon or early evening. In Missing 411: O the Grid, there is a table on page 358 that shows cumulative data from seven books. The pre-dominant time disappearances occur is just before it gets dark; that fact hasn't changed.

Disability or Illness

An abnormal number of the missing has some disability or illness. This fact only shows itself after vetting thousands of cases. Many readers have stated that it appears to them as though someone or something is closely monitoring these people and wants to understand more about their genetic markers.

Lack of Memory

It's rare when a victim is found, it's extremely rare when they are found alive. In the instances where a victim can talk and be questioned, the vast majority cannot remember how they got lost or what happened while they were missing. In almost every instance where a victim is found alive, searchers and law enforcement rarely sit with them and debrief about the experience. The e ort may be futile as the victim's memory may be blank.

Missing Are Often Found Near Creeks, Rivers, Ponds, Lakes, and Streams

In my book, Missing 411: A Sobering Coincidence, I documented over 100 cases where young men vanished, sometimes in a large crowd of friends. Nobody can explain where the person went or how they left. Days, sometimes weeks, later he is found in a body of water, deceased. Just as in previous books, there is a geographical clustering of the missing. I would refer readers to our geographical cluster map of North America for details on this portion of the research.

In my first four Missing 411 books, many victims were found near creeks, rivers, and ponds, and many times the victims would've had to travel unusual and di icult terrain to get to those places.

In many instances, the victim is found amongst rocks and boulders adjacent to the body of water.

Boulders and Granite

The most significant cluster of missing people anywhere in the world that matches our criteria is Yosemite National Park. Yosemite happens to be one of those locations in the world that has a high concentration of granite. There are many people documented in our books that are found in boulder fields, amongst boulders and large rocks.

Swamps and Bogs

Some readers will find the fact that many missing people are located in the middle of swamps and bogs a highly unusual place to locate people. I have lost count of the number of times this fact has proven itself to be true. Marshes are one of those places that the general public won't casually wander. It could be considered one of those locations where few people ever trek. It is also a place discounted by many SAR personnel as too di icult for the victim to travel.

Point of Separation

I've always claimed that a hiker traveling alone in the mountains is probably going to be more safety conscious than someone traveling with a group. I can attest that when I am alone, I am much more cognizant of my surroundings and the inherent danger of what I might be doing. I know that if I break my leg in the wild, I'm alone against the elements with nobody to seek assistance on my behalf.

I am continuing a practice I started in my last book of reinforcing the moment of separation. When I am telling the story, at the point the person leaves the presence of others, I am going to strengthen this moment by including the statement, "point of separation." I want you to know that they have left the safety of numbers and they are now alone. Hundreds have written to me about this point and that it appears as though the victim was being watched—and at the time they were vulnerable and isolated, the unusual happened.

Equipment Malfunction

In documenting hundreds of missing people, you will eventually read about the air support that goes along with all SARs. There are a high number of engine and equipment issues associated with the SAR of the victims. In my past book, I included a story about a hunter. I think the facts surrounding an equipment issue is essential and I add it again below.

When I was writing this book, I came across a cluster of missing sportsmen in an area within 5 miles from Lake Superior on the Wisconsin-Michigan border. On November 21, 1948, Frank Naslund went hunting with three other friends in this exact area. Sometime in the early morning hours, the men separated to hunt. Three of the four hunters made it back to their vehicles at lunch. Frank didn't arrive, and a search was initiated.

Late in the afternoon on November 22, Frank found a fire cut and followed it until he came to a roadway and got assistance. The reason this story is here is for what Frank told a reporter in a November 23, 1948, article in the Rhinelander Daily News: "He said his compass was not functioning properly and he built a fire alongside a creek and spent a night there."

A malfunctioning compass is a factor in disappearances that nobody has addressed. Anomalies in the environment that would cause a compass to malfunction are a fascinating topic to explore. Tn Frank's case, we don't know if he had a broken compass or if there was something in the environment that caused Frank's instrument to

malfunction. If it was something in the atmosphere, could this be a contributing factor in many of the disappearances in this and other areas? With the advancements made in GPS technology, people are carrying trail guides and other items based on this technology. The compass has taken a backseat to GPS in need to determine location, direction, and route.

I realize that various types of rocks can a ect the materials used in the manufacture of a compass. Could rocks have had an impact on how the compass operated? Could something else have been happening in Frank's location that impacted how it functioned? This is good food for thought. Now take the issue of the compass and transfer that to instruments on airplanes. Could the crashes in the triangles be related to some atmospheric anomaly that e ects engines and devices? If a compass is malfunctioning on the ground, could the same be happening above?

Maps

After reviewing thousands of missing people reports and documenting these in our books, we started to place the disappearances on a map of North America. The result of this e ort is the identification of 59 geographical clusters of the missing in North America. This map is much too large to replicate in any book, it is available for purchase through our online store, www.canammissing.com.

Notes

Many of you will mark this book up extensively with notes and thoughts on cases; I encourage this. I've had readers tell me that they've read each book three or four times to better absorb raw facts. In each case, I have attempted to leave several notes to identify source material. Many of the case facts came directly from SAR and law enforcement reports.

The NPS has given me the designation of a "Commercial Requestor" for all FOIA requests. This essentially means they can charge me up to four times what they charge the average citizen for documents and materials. This is a blatant attempt to detract us from requesting and obtaining missing person reports, as they know we can't a ord those outrageous prices. Many of you have stepped forward and o ered to seek case files on our behalf and allow our research to continue; this is sincerely appreciated. Your continued and ongoing support is needed for us to further our work. My contact information is on the last page of this book.

This book evolved over the last six years. We first emphasized missing people in national parks and then added national forests. As more cases were added, the type of disappearances and the activity of the victim slowly accumulated. Adding national forests to the national park research added hunters to the equation. Hunting isn't allowed in national parks. Fishing is allowed in the parks, and we did have a few fishermen listed in the first few books. National forests and open spaces showed a specific activity among hikers that seemed to be prevalent to disappearances. Hunters are among the biggest groups of missing people, right behind hikers.

What about hunters puts them high on our list of missing people? Why wouldn't fishermen have the same number as hunters? In many states fishing is a year-round activity, and there are many more fishermen in North America than hunters. According to statista.com, in 2008, there were 18.25 million hunters in the United States and 48.85 million fishermen. Almost exactly two and a half times more fishermen than hunters, yet there are far more hunters missing if you stick strictly to the profile points.

As someone who has hiked deep into the woods to access outstanding fishing grounds over the years, I understand how anyone could get lost. It doesn't matter if you're a fisherman or hunter; everyone knows that following any stream of water downhill will eventually lead you to safety and larger bodies of water. I can remember one extensive hike I did with my dad that took us near the Canadian border on the outskirts of Glacier National Park. I can't say we were ever lost, but there was a definite sense of being in the middle of nowhere. So, what is it about hunters versus fisherman? Why do hunters disappear in disproportionately greater numbers compared to fishermen?

There are many things that fishermen and hunters have in common, and many do both activities. But to drill down on hunters, what is it about them that's di erent? Think about these questions:

- Is it something in their activity?
- Eating habits?
- Lifestyle?
- Clothing?
- Being in a specific location?

· Carrying a weapon?

· Mind-set?

· General attitude?

As you read the book, make notes. If you think we need to add any to the list, let us know.

You are going to read a series of stories where the victims never thought they'd be lost. They never thought it would happen to them. What were they thinking during those last moments before they dozed o and never awoke again? Were they wishing they had dressed warmer, told a friend where they were traveling, or carried" a personal locator transponder? What really happened to these people?

The vast majority of these stories have never been documented at this level before. It's stunning how many bodies are strewn throughout the mountains of North America. If you don't think this can happen to you, think again.

UNITED STATES

Alaska

Name Date Missing» Age» Sex

Anthony Granata 08/18/66» 31»M

Patrick Chambers 08/03/2006, 9:00 a.m.» 54»M

*If no time is listed, then the time is unknown.

Anthony Granata

Missing: 08/18/66, McCarthy, AK

Age at disappearance: 31 years (Some reports indicate 28 years)
Weather» Previously Searched

Sometimes a job doesn't define the man. Anthony was an accountant for Chanslor, Barbieri and Dewhitt in Reno, Nevada. He was a husband and devoted father that loved the outdoors. He was an extremely capable outdoorsman who was always aware of his surroundings. His wife and brother felt that Anthony could take care of himself while he was alone in the outdoors. Even though he was an accountant, he also was a master of his outdoor environment.

In early August 1966, Anthony drove from Reno to Seattle, where he caught a flight to Alaska. His intent was to make a series of excursions from McCarthy into the Wrangell Mountains, hunting for Dall sheep and goats.

McCarthy is a very small community approximately 225 miles east of Anchorage and 30 miles west of the Canadian border and Kluane National Park. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is 10 miles north of McCarthy. Anthony was leaving McCarthy and heading north toward the Nizina Glacier and hunting high in altitude.

The Reno hunter made a trip alone into the mountains and returned to McCarthy with quite a story to tell. He had shot a trophy sheep and goat and had returned with the heads. He was so loaded down that he had to leave his rifle and other supplies in the mountains. He left some of his supplies back in his room in McCarthy, including a roll of film he had taken in the mountains. The Kennecott copper mine was one of the last stops a hiker or hunter could make and have conversation with a human before disappearing into the Wrangell's. He had made friends with the mine's caretaker, Howard Knutzen. He had told the miner that he was going back into the mountains to get his supplies, and he would be back no later than August 18. He never came back, and Howard called authorities to report the hunter as missing.

Word slowly worked its way back to Reno that Anthony hadn't returned to McCarthy, and the gears started to turn about the family's response. Anthony's wife had young children, so the family representative sent to Alaska to manage the search was Anthony's twenty-two-year-old brother, Archie.

As the younger Granata was making his way to Alaska, the massive and complex search for the hunter was already underway. The US Army had sent an eighteen-man mountain team into the area of the Wrangell Mountains to search the land. Two Army helicopters, along with the civil air patrol, US Air Force, and Alaska National Guard, were searching from the air. Several articles state that the search was compromised at several points because of heavy fog. Elmendorf Air Force Base played an integral role in this rescue attempt.

In early September Archie arrived in McCarthy. Imagine a young college student arriving at one of the most remote parts of Alaska to look for his brother. The task was huge. The young man started out gathering facts and talking to people in the community. He found that his brother had left some things behind. He searched the items and

found the roll of film. He had it flown to Seattle to get developed and then flown back to McCarthy. Several photos in the roll showed Anthony with a huge Dall sheep that he had killed in the Wrangell range. The pictures were shown to locals who positively identified the area as Green Butte near the Nizina Glacier or McCarthy Glacier. (Articles were conflicted on this point.) This narrowed the search.

Archie left for the butte assisted by a guide with knowledge of the area. The men found one campsite that appeared to have been used by Anthony. Archie found a matchbook with an advertisement from Ely, Nevada. He also found used food wrappers from supplies that Archie had given Anthony confirming that it was his brother's site. It was now early September, and the search continued to narrow.

At this point the armed forces felt that they had covered approximately forty square miles in their search. Archie described the area as very rocky and barren. A body would stick out from the air and would be easily identified. Air searchers were not finding anything. The Air Force, Army, Civil Air Patrol, and Alaska National Guard reported that they had flown over forty-eight sorties.

Archie and his guide returned from the mountains without finding Anthony. They did find the area that was in the photo Anthony had taken, but they found nothing of evidentiary value. A September 6, 1966, article in the Nevada State Journal had this headline: "Copter to Join Hunt for Renoite." The Merrit Corporation from Fairbanks had assisted the family by supplying a private helicopter to fly the Wrangell's with Archie. As the armed services' search was almost over, Senator Alan Bible was pressing for more air time and search e ort from the army and air force. The Granata family was making a heroic e ort to find their relative, and they were not easily giving up.

Archie reported to family members that the area they were searching did not have any snow. The ground had lots of rocks but was essentially barren. Clues to where Anthony might be were quickly evaporating, and brutal fall weather was starting to move into the McCarthy area. An Air Force rescue team had taken over search coordination in early September, and even they were now starting to pack up and leave. Archie eventually had to return to school, and weather issues started to move into the Wrangell's. The search was finally terminated in late September.

A September 24, 1966, article in the Nevada State Journal had a great photo that was taken in the Wrangell's of Anthony posing with his rifle and Dall sheep. The article made this statement, "Tony walked

into what has proven to be a mystery void."

Anthony Granata's disappearance is a true mystery. The man had been successful in shooting a trophy sheep and goat and even returned safely to humanity with his prize. He must've made a strenuous hike out of the mountains with his game as he was forced to leave behind his rifle and other supplies. The return trip to get these supplies was his undoing.

In researching thousands of missing person reports, I know that many hunters have vanished with firearms. I don't know of anyone that has vanished with a firearm and personal satellite emergency transponder. I realize that Anthony didn't have this choice when he went hunting. Hunters have this option today. Carrying an emergency transponder may have saved this hunter's life.

The epilogue to this case is found in a June 13, 1970, article in the Fairbanks Daily, "A prospector has found what is believed to be the remains of a Reno, Nevada man who disappeared while hunting goats in the Wrangell Mountains in September of 1966. The missing man was identified as Anthony Granata. The prospector was unidentified, found some camping gear and a diary belonging to Granata near a decomposed body." How searchers missed Anthony's body is the million-dollar question. No other details were provided.

Patrick Chambers

Missing: 08/03/2006, 9:00 a.m., Edna Bay, AK

Age at disappearance: 54 years Weather» Cluster Zone

I don’t know if you could find a more gorgeous place to live than Edna Bay, Alaska. It’s located at the far northwest portion of Prince of Wales Island on Kosciuko Island. The island isn’t small at 171 square miles. The bay is located nearly 90 miles north of Ketchikan. It has a population of approximately fifty, with one of the residents being a

fifteen-year homeowner, fifty-four-year-old Patrick Chambers. According to friends, Dr. William Schneider, Bill Cooper, and Bertyn Chappell. The friends decided to travel east of Placerville to a known hunting site of James', the Cat Creek Region.

James and his friends got to the hunting location early in the morning and decided to split up to the hunt (Point of Separation). They all agreed to meet back up in three hours. At approximately 11:00 a.m., the group met again at their cars, James never arrived. The group searched for a few hours and then decided to notify the El Dorado County Sheri .

The formal search with significant numbers of people in the forest started on October 3. The sheri was able to get large numbers of searchers from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) who spent eight days looking for James.

Searchers were told that James was extremely comfortable in the woods and had hunted this area since he was a much younger man. In 1937 James had been a United States Forest Service Trail Crew member and had lived in the woods for much of his summer. He was trained in survival techniques and had carried extra ammunition and some food and water.

On October 4, 1938, the Santa Ana Register had this information on the search for James Mortimer, "A ground party of more than 100 searchers resumed the hunt this morning. It was feared that Mortimer was injured since he was familiar with the country. Early snow and weekend rains hampered the search."

The first formal search for James ended on October 20, 1938. The head of the SAR, Euell Gray had stated that all e orts to find any trace of the hunter had failed. There was a secondary search in early November 1938 in the same general area for any evidence of James; it was again halted because of heavy snow with nothing found.

James Mortimer was never located.

Luke H. Kuykendall

Missing: 09/16/41, Balch Hill, CA

Age at disappearance: 65 years

Point of Separation* Cluster Zone

The overwhelming majority of hunters in the United States are city dwellers who occasionally go to the mountains to find an escape and enjoy the outdoors. Many of these people do not regularly exercise and don't realize that as you go up into the mountains, elevation has a profound impact on your cardiovascular system and ability to get oxygen into your system. What you were able to do at twenty years old at eight thousand feet in elevation can't be done at sixty-five years old. Everyone who goes to the mountains needs to be warned that elevation and physical exertion can be fatal to people who aren't in good aerobic shape.

This incident is a very unusual case. In one hunting party there are two disasters. I've never heard of anything similar to this.

The facts surrounding this case di er on the age of the victim. Some say that Luke Kuykendall was fifty-nine years old; the majority stated he was sixty-five. He worked at a bank in San Francisco and made the three-hour drive south to meet his friends Earl Ray and E. R. Vetter in Sacramento. The three buddies made the two- hour drive east into their hunting grounds, which they established at Balch Camp, near Sugar Pine Hill, where they met other friends. This is sixteen miles south of Dinkey Creek and considered the foothills of the Sierras.

On September 16, 1941, Ray and Vetter went out to hunt deer, and Luke stayed in camp. The hunter had a heart problem that restricted his ability to move fluidly in the mountains. While Luke was maintaining camp, another hunter came in and said that one of his hunting companions had been shot, and he'd come back to get medical care. Others in the hunting party gathered together and started to leave the camp to head into the woods to render aid, including Luke. An October 1, 1941, article in the Fresno Bee explains what happened next: "Kuykendall's companions said they dissuaded him from continuing with them because they thought the trip was too much for him. They left him sitting on the trail 200 yards from the camp, in sight of the camp, and that is the last he was seen."

As rescuers came back into the camp, they couldn't find Kuykendall. This didn't immediately impact anyone because they were still reeling over the fact that E. R. Vetter had accidentally shot Earl Ray, mistaking him for a deer. Ray was killed instantly. They did start searching for Luke fairly quickly.

You need to understand this scenario. One person in the hunting party (Ray) accidentally kills another (Vetter). Another person in the hunting party (Kuykendall) goes to the aid of the victim, and he

disappears. If you are a member of this hunting party, you are now wondering what is going to happen next.

Luke's sons heard of the tragedy and came to the aid of their dad. They tried to assist rangers by describing the abilities of their father and how far they thought he could actually travel. The rangers had the lead on the search e ort and did get volunteers and other hunters to the scene.

Searchers claimed that they found a shoe print that matched the boot he was wearing three miles from the point where Luke had last been seen. The issue was that there were many hunters in the area wearing the same type of boot. They really didn't know if it was from Luke. There was a large search for the hunter that lasted for thirteen days. They didn't find anything. An October 1 article in the Fresno Bee explains the feelings of searchers about the e ort to find the hunter: "The searchers said Kuykendall apparently vanished as if he had sunk into the ground, no trace of him having been found in a month's minute and widespread search in the vicinity of the hunting camp from which he vanished." These are pretty strong words from searchers. They didn't find anything and were confused by that fact. This was an elderly man with a heart problem. He should've been found.

The negativity surrounding this hunting trip would convince anyone to never go to the woods again.

Luke was never found.

R. W. Jacobson

Missing: 10/18/53, Markleeville, CA Age at disappearance: 34 years Point of Separation* Granite/Boulders* Weather

R. W. Jacobson worked as a lumberman for the Cai-Ida Lumber Company in Auburn. In 1953 the lumber industry in California was still viable and the lifeblood for many rural communities. Auburn was a small city east of Sacramento at the entrance to the Sierra Nevada Mountains in central California. In mid-October of 1953, Jacobson made the drive east from Auburn into the high Sierras to hunt deer. He was headed for an area at the eight-thousand-foot elevation near Markleeville and the borders of Mono and Alpine County. Even today this area is remote, without a lot of resources. This specific location is approximately eight miles west of Nevada.

On October 18, Jacobson was hunting with a few friends when they

somehow got separated. Jacobson never made it back to the hunting camp. His friends searched for him for a short while, and then the weather started to change, and snow began falling. The sheri was called.

Alpine County Sheri 's deputy Ray Koenig took charge of the e ort to locate Jacobson. His companions got word back to Auburn of his disappearance, and friends started to mass for assistance. An October 24, 1953, article in the Nevada State Journal had this information about the e ort to locate the hunter: "Search parties involving 100 men, representing more than one-third of the total population of the sparsely settled county, broke up. The posse included 50 fellow workers of Jacobson at an Auburn lumber company, 20 airmen from Stead Air Force Base from Reno, 12 Marines from Pickle Meadows in Mono County and local citizens." This was a huge e ort for a very rural county. Just the logistics of feeding this group must've overwhelmed the rural area.

Jacobson was thought to have vanished near the eight-thousand- foot level east of Ebbetts Pass in a granite landscape without a lot of trees. I have personally gone fishing in this area many times. There isn't much out there, and I have never seen many people. Considering this was 1953,1 doubt that many traveled this far east from the urban areas surrounding Sacramento.

The snow continued to fall during the entire SAR for Jacobson. Aircraft that were on standby for the search never made it to the area. An October 23, 1953, article in The Times had this statement from o icials: "Deputy Sheri Ray Koenig said, 'There's no hope left for finding him alive. We haven't found a trace or a track.' The search was given up when it started snowing heavily in the area."

On November 1, 1953, for some reason, there was another brief search for the hunter. This time thirty-six survival-trained airmen from Stead Air Force Base went back into the mountains to search. The team was from the 3904th Training Squadron. This group searched for two days and again found nothing.

The last article I can find about Jacobson involved the search for a small girl that went missing in an area thirty miles north of where he disappeared. The article confirmed that the hunter was never found.

You won't find R. W. Jacobson in any database of missing people. It's another person that's been lost and essentially forgotten by the general public. Even NAMUS, the National Missing and Un-identified

Persons System maintained by the National Institute of Justice, doesn't have him in its database.

Ellison Flowers

Missing: 09/23/58, Mount San Bernardino, CA

Age at disappearance: 26 years Cluster Zone* Weather* Canines

Mount San Bernardino is in the San Bernardino National Forest and is part of the mountains you see when you look northeast from Disneyland or San Bernardino. The mountains loom large and aren't that far from the metropolis we know as Los Angeles. The national forest has a long history of unusual disappearances and is one of the geographical clusters of missing people we have identified in North America. The types of disappearances in the region involve a wide range of victims: from the very young to the very old (including one who was brilliant). One of the last cases I wrote about in Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail was about a physics professor that was visiting from Germany and attending a conference at a lakeside retreat. In the last afternoon, he went with a group on a scheduled activity walking a trail around the resort. There was a counselor in the front of the group and one in the rear. The counselor in the rear became ill and stayed behind, so the professor was now the last in line. He never made it back. This was a very well-defined trail. There was a lengthy search from the air and ground. He was never found.

This story deals with a twenty-six-year-old hunter that owned a gas station on Waterman Avenue in Highland California. He called his wife on September 23 from the gas station and stated that he was driving up to the area of Jenks Lake, and at the time it was in the San Gregorio Wilderness. He stated that he'd leave in the early afternoon and be back in time to close the station. Ellison Flowers was a very experienced outdoorsman and had the social skills to run a profitable service station.

The drive for Ellison wasn't extremely lengthy, but it was on a winding dirt road up the side of the mountain. As eleven o'clock—closing time for the gas station—was looming, the attendant called Ellison's wife, Dolores, and asked where Ellison was. Dolores was surprised he wasn't there. He was extremely reliable. She went to the station, closed the business, and went home, hoping to find her husband. He had told her that he'd be back at the station no later than ten thirty. When Ellison didn't arrive home the following morning, Dolores called law enforcement.

The sheri sent a unit up onto the mountain to find Ellison's sedan. An October 2, 1958, article in the San Bernardino County Sun had this information on the weather: "The first day he was reported missing, bad weather hampered the search for him but by the second day a

full-scale search was launched. The terrain there is some of the most rugged in Southern California."

At the peak of the search, more than one hundred fifty volunteers and professionals were scouring the region above Jenks Lake, looking for Ellison. Deputies found his vehicle on Poop-Out Hill and initially centered their e orts there. The Yucaipa substation for the sheri was heading the e ort to locate the hunter and had allocated over twenty deputies and another one hundred fifty volunteers. Articles at the time stated that rain, sleet, and fog hampered searchers o and on during the hunt. Dolores told deputies that Ellison was extremely familiar with the area as he had hunted it for many years.

Formal searches for Ellison went on for over a month. The e ort included fifty marines from the Nebo Marine Base, sheri s' search and rescue, Bloodhounds, the Sierra Madre Rescue Group, and US Forest Service aircraft. The e ort failed to find anything. Almost two years passed, two hunting seasons, and nothing had been found. Then suddenly there was a break in the case. An October 8, 1960, article in the San Bernardino County Sun described what a hunter found: "Thursday, James A. Rasmussen, 23, of Pomona was hunting in the same area and spotted a skeleton while making a wide sweep through his binoculars. Rasmussen saw human remains and clothing about 150 yards below a gigantic rock described by Georgen- ton as about two stories high. It is believed the victim fell from this rock sometime after his disappearance." Deputies confirmed it was Ellison. They found his wallet, rifle, and US Army registration card.

Rescuers stated that it took them three hours to reach the body from where Ellison had parked his vehicle. One article surmises that he must have been confronted with a "sudden snowstorm" (same article as quoted above). The theory from law enforcement is that Ellison died of exposure.

Let's think carefully about the evidence we are given. A three- week search by almost two hundred marines, deputies, aircraft, and volunteers turns up nothing. Bloodhounds find nothing, a commonality in almost every story I have chronicled. Ellison is later found at the bottom of a two-story high rock, from which people believe he fell, yet they believe he died from exposure.

Were any broken bones identified? When a body is next to a solid granite wall, the odors and scent of the body are fairly concentrated away from that wall, yet the Bloodhounds got nothing. How could one hunter two years after the event see a body from one hundred fifty

yards away, yet a plethora of searchers, aircraft, and canines missed it?

This exact scenario has been replicated time after time in many of my books. Ellison was found in the exact search area in which he was lost.

One important fact among the evidence in this event is the location of the body. Ellison was a three-hour hike from his car. He promised to be back at the station at no later than 10:30 p.m. He left the station in the early afternoon, made the 90-120-minute drive to the site, and then did the hike. If he arrived at the site at 2:00 p.m., hiked three hours, and it was dark then. There is no way he was hiking in the dark. He was an experienced hunter who knew the area well and knew the distances. Even if he had gotten into the area at noon, he had to find a deer, shoot and gut the deer, and then haul it back out, a monumental task for the time allotted.

There is much about this story that doesn't make any sense. Questions to ask:

• Why wasn't Ellison's body found by aircraft, ground searchers, and Bloodhounds?

• Ellison knew his hunting area very well. Would he have fallen o the biggest rock in the

area?

• If Ellison fell two stories, why didn't the fall kill him?

• One article stated that Ellison's rifle was found with one round fired. Why wouldn't he

have fired multiple rounds to alert searchers?

• Bloodhounds don't care about politics or who they are searching for, they love to work.

Why didn't they key on his scent in the area?

The Ellison Flowers case will be added to the dozens of others where the victim was eventually found in an area that had been searched many times.

Bernard Orpustan

Missing: 12/23/72- 4:30 p.m., Glen Haven, CA

Age at disappearance: 31 years

Point of Separation* Weather

Lake County, California is located seventy miles north of San Francisco just east of the coast of California. It's a fascinating body of water that is not clear at all, and I have no idea how it got its name. My dad had friends that lived on the lake, and I've been there several times. There are rolling hills that surround the water with a lot of vegetation on the land. In recent years drought conditions have inundated this area and wildfires have been prevalent. In 1972, when this event happened, the conditions were much di erent, and the countryside was green and filled with life.

Bernard Orpustan was born in France and came to the United States with his wife, Ann. They had lived in San Francisco and later moved to Glen Haven (a small community on the east side of Clear Lake), and Bernard commuted to work in Daly City.

On December 23, 1972, the Orpustan's had their parents visiting. At 2:30 p.m., Bernard told his family that he was taking his shotgun up towards Saw Mill Flats near Bartlett Mountain to go Quail hunting. He had been to this area many times and enjoyed outdoors. The location was a quick trip from his home, and he said he'd be back in a few hours. As darkness started to set, Ann realized that something was wrong and drove to Saw Mill Flats and found Bernard's car locked and his gun gone. The frantic wife called for her husband, walked the area briefly and then realized she needed more assistance, went home and called the Lake County Sheri 's o ice.

On December 24, 1972, the search for the missing hunter started. Thirty men in jeeps and horseback combed the countryside on the northeast side of Bartlett Mountains 4,478 foot summit. Articles stated that they found one set of tracks leaving the area of the car, nothing else and the tracks went nowhere. The sheri called in a private plane and a helicopter on loan from the Sonoma County Sheri to search. He also called in two busloads of prisoners from the Ko-nocti Conservation Camp to help in the ground search.

The SAR commander was puzzled by the disappearance. If someone got lost in this area, they could keep walked and come to a reservoir, other roads, and homes. It was a remote region, but not without assistance a few miles away. This January 3, 1973 article in the Press Democrat described search conditions, "The search has been hampered by snow and rain, but with today's good weather, searchers

hoped to find him."

The search for Bernard lasted sixteen days and found nothing. An experienced hunter and outdoorsman that knew the area he was hiking. Searchers found nothing to indicate where Bernard had traveled, and his remains were never located. It is surprising after all of these years that a rifle, boots, belt buckle, etc., was never found by other hunters or hikers 18

Thomas Seager

Missing: 10/07/73, Ross Meadow, CA Age at disappearance: 33 years
Cluster Zone» Point of Separation» Granite/ Boulders

Thomas was born and raised in Ogden, Utah. He was known to the community as an intelligent and athletic young man. He graduated from school and landed a job with the Internal Revenue Service and was soon transferred to Austin, Texas. In 1971 he was transferred to the Fresno Center, and then in 1973 he was chief of the computer branch at the center, a prestigious job for a young professional. Thomas was married and the father of three.

On October 7, 1973, Thomas and a group of friends left their Fresno area residence and took a fairly short drive east into the Sierra Nevada Mountains. They went into a region near Dinkey Creek, Ross Meadow, and Patterson Mountain. As noted in my previous books, this area has seen some very unusual disappearances of people who have never been found.

Something happened while the group was hunting, and it is described in this October 11, 1973, article in the Press Courier: “Thomas H. Seager, 33, became separated from hunting companions in rugged terrain in the Ross Meadows area near Patterson Mountain. Seager is an experienced woodsman and was warmly dressed to cope with near freezing overnight temperatures, o icers said.”

Thomas was hunting with his friend, John Hunsaker, when they somehow got separated. This is a very, very common profile point in many of the missing persons reports I write about. Hunsaker and Thomas had agreed that if separated they would meet back at base at Ross Meadows camp at 1:00 p.m. Thomas never arrived.

Once Thomas’s friends realized he was lost, the Fresno County Sheri ’s O ice was notified, and they called for additional assistance. The sheri didn’t have to ask for assistance from the IRS.

Thomas’s work associates heard of the disappearance and arrived en masse and stayed for days. It was obvious that he was admired by many people.

Planes flew the sky, searchers on the ground were covering the area very thoroughly, and a helicopter was chartered by his Latter-Day Saints church to aid in the e ort.

Searchers were so thorough that they found .32-caliber shell casings.

It was the same caliber as the rifle he was carrying, but nobody knew whether it was his. The October 17, 1973, headline in the Fresno Bee described the feelings of o icials: “Disappearance of Fresno Hunter Ba les Searchers.” O icials stated that no matter what direction Thomas may have hiked, he would’ve hit a road and safety. They were puzzled about why they hadn’t found him in their search area and more puzzled about why he hadn’t walked out. Nobody had heard gunfire indicating he needed assistance.

After an eleven-day search, Thomas was never found, a common end to the story in this part of the Sierras. The region has significant amounts of granite, and this seems to be associated with disappearances in these mountains. The largest geographical cluster of missing people in the world is Yosemite National Park. Many readers have associated the granite in the park with other locations involving boulders and granite where others have vanished.

I felt great pain while writing this story, for Thomas’s wife, Vel- da, and their two sons and daughter. Knowing they would grow up without their father is a horrible thought.

Jack Scane

Missing: 10/22/73, Little Baldy Mountain, CA Age at disappearance: 54 years

Canines* Point of Separation* Weather* Cluster Zone* Hunter

I will continually advise against hunting alone. If you do not own and carry a personal locator beacon and you are traveling o trail (as most hunters do) and you break your leg, there’s a good chance nobody will locate you, and that will be your demise. There are countless numbers of hikers and hunters that have vanished o trail and have never been found.

On October 22, 1973, farmer Jack Scane left his residence in Mendota early in the morning, drove through Fresno and traveled east on highway 168 to Shaver Lake where he took a brief break. Jack met a friend, advised him he was going to Little Baldy Mountain and would meet him later that night. The hunter was last seen traveling eastbound on the highway.

As the night of October 22 came, Jack never arrived at the lake, and Jack’s friend traveled to Little Baldy Mountain. He located Mr. Scane’s vehicle and fired o three shots; nothing was fired back. He briefly searched the area and then made the drive back towards the city to

notify the Fresno County Sheri of his missing friend.

The SAR for Jack Scane started the afternoon of October 23. The prior weekend had inclement weather in the area, and it had rained heavily leaving the ground muddy. Hundreds of friends and relatives and formal searchers went to Little Baldy Mountain and combed the area finding nothing. The October 29, 1973 article in the Fresno Bee had the following details, “Sheri ’s Captain William Young said Bloodhounds were sent today into the Little Baldy Mountain area east of Shaver Lake to look for missing deer hunter Jack Scane.” The sheri also reported that there had been an extensive e ort from airplanes and helicopters that covered many square miles of the area.

A week-long search found no evidence that Jack Scane was even in the mountains hunting. The canines brought to the scene could not locate a scent, and the search was terminated.

I could not locate any notes on additional searches.

Jerry Lee McKoen

Missing: 09/21/2002, Medicine Lake Road, McCloud, CA

Age at disappearance: 48 years

Bow Hunter* Cluster Zone* Canines

Jerry McKoen was a rancher and farmer in Merrill, Oregon, approximately two miles north of the California border. Jerry assisted in the family business and was an avid outdoorsman. He was single, lived at the family residence, and was a very caring son. Jerry was known throughout the area as an experienced hunter who truly went the extra distance to make it a sport. He didn’t use a rifle; he used a bow and arrows. He would sit patiently and sometimes stealthily sneak up on his prey. Bow hunters are one of the groups of missing people that seem to disappear in disproportionately higher numbers based on the amount of people who hunt with a bow.

On Saturday, September 21, 2002, at 5:30 a.m., Jerry left the family residence in a GMC pickup with a camper shell. He was carrying a Honda 185XL motorcycle in the bed of the truck, which he would sometimes use to get into rough country.

Jerry McKoen Jerry's family didn't hear from him for four days, so they filed a missing person report on September 25. Neighboring farmers dropped their harvest work and immediately started to search for the forty-eight-year-old hunter. It was originally thought that Jerry might have gone to the Klamath Marsh or Christmas Valley to hunt, but both theories were incorrect.

A friend of Jerry's found his pickup and motorcycle approximately twenty miles east of Mount Shasta on Medicine Lake Road in an area known as Doorknob Snow Park. The friend also found Jerry's keys in a part of the truck where he normally hid them, indicating he had parked the truck there and gone hunting.

Seventy searchers were under the direction of the Siskiyou County Sheri 's O ice, which headed the ground teams. There were as many as two teams of search dogs, four airplanes, and two helicopters, all searching the low and thick brush that covers the area. The area has small timber, but there is nothing that towers over the area. At the height of the search, over one hundred searchers were participating in an organized grid search of the area surrounding Jerry's pickup.

Several friends were interviewed near the time that Jerry went missing. Those questioned stated that Jerry was the consummate outdoorsman and could handle anything the woods could throw at him.

After several days of searching, the Siskiyou County SAR teams had no evidence that Jerry was even in the area. Teams never found any of the equipment that he should have been carrying, and no arrows were found in the area. If someone becomes injured, he or she will sometimes start shedding equipment. No equipment was found, and the searches did not find any animals he may have killed.

Case Summary

This is another of the many cases where an individual disappears alone in the woods. Even though Jerry was armed, he only had a bow and arrows. The stealthy nature of a bow hunter brings to mind many questions about what occurred. Perhaps Jerry saw something that he shouldn't have and was killed, or maybe something snuck up on him when he wasn't expecting it.

The location where Jerry disappeared is still in the close shadows of Mount Shasta. It is a predominant presence, in the area of a snowmobile park, and is an area that is very, very desolate. The location of Jerry's disappearance is approximately twenty-five miles from McCloud. This spot o ers some very mundane landscape compared to other missing people cases across North America. The hills are small; there are no huge peaks in the immediate area; and there aren't any large bodies of water nearby. Siskiyou County utilized

helicopters in this search and hopefully utilized FLIR. This would be the ideal terrain for FLIR because it could easily penetrate small shrubs and identify a heat signature.

This case held my interest because of Jerry's outdoors experience, the fact that no equipment was found in the search, and the relatively tame topography where no evidence of the missing was ever found.

Robert Willis

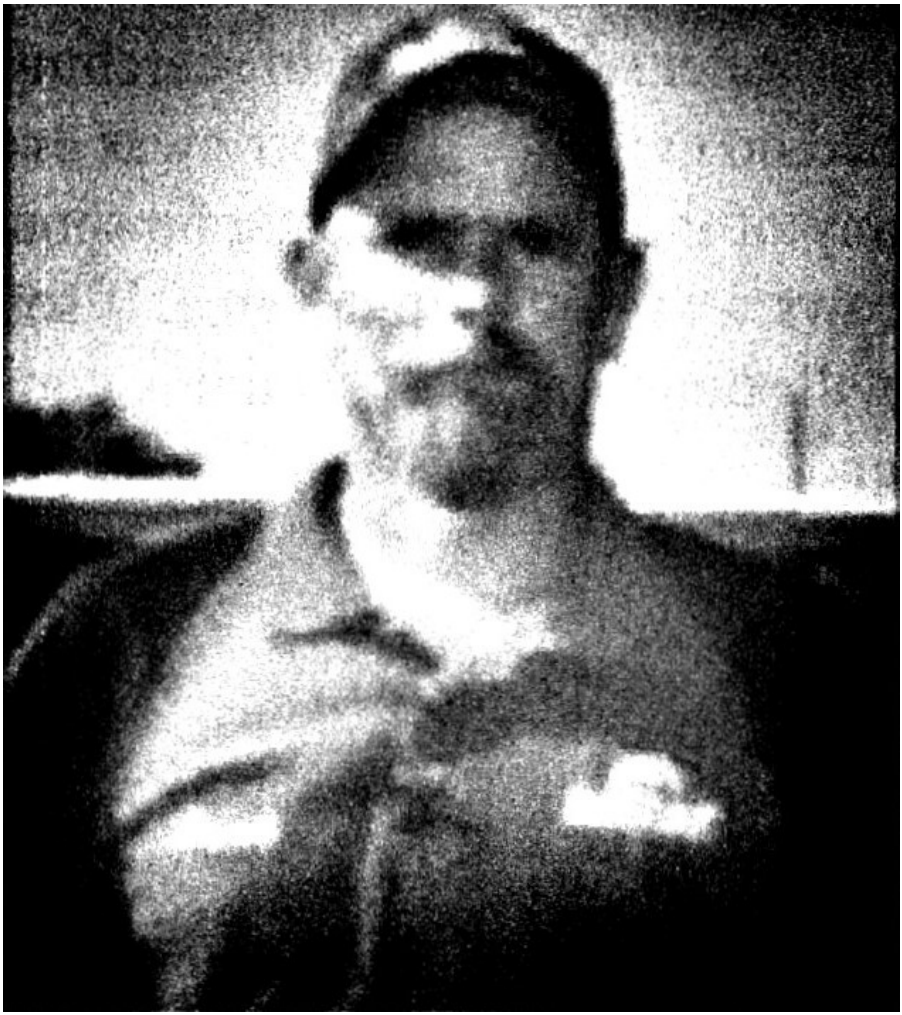
Missing: 10/31/2008, Dinkey Creek, CA

Age at disappearance: 38 years

Cluster Zone* Canines* Weather

Robert Willis was a very experienced hunter and a devoted family man. He left his residence in Caruthers for the short drive up into the Sierras to Dinkey Creek, just south of Shaver Lake. The creek runs at six thousand feet, and the mountains surrounding the valley are above nine thousand feet. There is a significant amount of exposed granite to the northwest, and his destination is surrounded by five large bodies of water. Robert knew this was going to be a two- day hunting trip as he needed to return for his son's football game.

Mr. Willis left his home on October 30, 2008, and was supposed to return on October 31. He was reported missing, according to search-and-rescue reports, on November 3 at 5:45 a.m. The Willis family responded, entering into the woods, and located Robert's 2000 Nissan Frontier pickup on Forestry Road 10S31. It did appear that Robert had taken all of the equipment he would've needed.



Robert Willis

The Fresno County sheri 's o ice led the rescue e ort. They brought in two helicopters, an airplane, Bloodhounds, the USFS, US National Park Service, and SAR teams from throughout the area.

Searchers knew that Robert liked to hunt Hall's Meadow, and that is where the search was centered. The longer the search e ort continued, the worse the weather got. On November 13 the e ort to locate Robert was halted because of heavy snow and freezing temperatures. There were additional searches; they found nothing.

Summary The area where Robert vanished is in the area between Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks, a region where

many people go missing. He was carrying a Tikka rifle T3.300 WSM, left-handed bolt action.

Colorado

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Reynolds, Mack, Brown, and Doniher 10/15/1893* Unknown* M

Floyd Chandler 10/11/37* 41*M

Harold L. Mercer 11/05/38* 38*M

Clyde Dillon 10/05/41*45* M

Norris Head 10/29/56* 26*M

Janice Okeson 11/07/77* 21*F

William R. Lyons 10/11/86* 51*M

Richard Harkins 09/07/2015* 43*M

Reynolds, Mack, Brown, and Doniher (No first names available) Missing: 10/12/1893-10/15/1893, Routt County, Colorado Age at disappearance: Unknown

Cluster Zone

I've read thousands of stories about disappearances, and this is one of the oddest. It's the story of five hunters who traveled to an area called Greasewood, fifteen miles west of Steamboat Springs. The five men were hunters and well-armed. The area had a river and several small bodies of water. This is one of the few locations in that area that did have water sources. Mountains in the area rose to just over seven thousand feet, and the plains were near an elevation of five thousand feet. This specific area has large sections that have never been logged.

T. H. Merrill was hunting with a man named Doniher. Both men left the group's camp and decided to hunt separately. Merrill returned to the camp that night, and Doniher did not. The following morning, Merrill traveled with Reynolds into the forest to look for Doniher. After a few hours, the men separated. Merrill made it back to camp; this time Reynolds never came back.

With two of the five hunters now missing, Mack and Brown decided to head into the woods and look for the missing men. Nobody knows if

they stayed together or split up, but neither man made it back to camp, leaving Merrill as the only man left.

An October 16, 1893, article in the Waterloo Daily Courier explained Merrill's thoughts: "They [the missing hunters] have not been seen since, and Merrill thought it was high time to inform the authorities of the mysterious disappearance. Nothing farther can be learned from the four missing men. The country where they disappeared is far from civilization and communication is di icult."

Summary

The area where these men disappeared is not at an extremely high elevation and didn't have steep and rugged mountains like much of Colorado, but a mixture of smaller mountains, plains, and rivers. The Greasewood area is west of Rocky Mountain National Park and Steamboat Springs.

I have never found one incident where four hunters disappeared in such close proximity, unless it was one catastrophic event; this was not.

Floyd Chandler

Missing: 10/11/37,4:30 p.m., Stove Prairie, CO

Age at disappearance: 41 years

Cluster Zone» Point of Separation* Canines* Previously Searched

In Missing 411: Western United States, I chronicled the disappearance of Alfred Beilhlartz from Rocky Mountain National Park and Jaryd Atadero from north of that location along the Cache La Poudre River. Another young boy, Chris Vigil disappeared on Grey Mountain near the entrance of the Cache La Poudre Valley. Mr. Chandler disappeared inside the triangle of the three other disappearances. This is a tight cluster of three boys and one man.

Floyd Chandler was a wealthy rancher, landowner, and hunting guide. He was described as one of the most knowledgeable guides and hunters in the Fort Collins area. On October 11,1937, Mr. Chandler had gone to scout deer for the upcoming season with his longtime friend and neighbor, O. R. Eberhart. They arrived at the camp and separated, with each scouting separate areas. Mr. Chandler was supposed to arrive back at camp by dark, but he didn't. About the time that Mr. Chandler was supposed to arrive, it started to rain and

continued through most of the night and early morning. Mr. Eberhart searched for his friend for two days before enlisting the assistance of law enforcement. The October 16, 1937, Greeley Daily Tribune had a detailed explanation of where Mr. Chandler had disappeared: “The cabin known as ‘Jay Bosworth’s Upper Camp’ is eight and one half miles straight west of the Stove Prairie Schoolhouse. Stove Prairie Schoolhouse is seven miles south of Stover Prairie Landing. Stove Prairie Landing is 27 miles west of Fort Collins on Poudre Canyon Highway.”

Planes, Bloodhounds, and huge numbers of ground teams worked the mountains in a method defined by the sheri in an attempt to locate Chandler. An October 14 article in the Greeley Tri-bune had this description of the search: “Long lines of searchers walking fairly close together were attempting to cover an area seven miles square, Jackson said: ‘This would be 49 square miles.’ Every precipice down which Chandler may have fallen was examined closely.” This was considered one of the biggest searches ever in this part of the state.

Law enforcement teams were ba led because they weren’t finding the normal tracks and evidence that Chandler was anywhere in the area. After almost three weeks of committed e ort, on November 3 the search was terminated.

On December 6, 1938, the Greeley Tribune had the following headlines: “Crumpled Body of Johnstown Man Is under Cli , Found 3 Miles from Where Rancher Disappeared 14 Months Ago.” Mr. Chandler had been found. Yes, Mr. Chandler was found just three miles from where he disappeared, well inside the search area. This same article described the area, and you can tell that Sheri Gooch was suspicious: “Gooch stated that o icers are giving careful scrutiny to the conditions and place of finding Chandler’s hunting rifle. It had apparently fallen over the thirty foot cli at the same time he did. The barrel was stuck in the soil at the base of the cli , the sight was bent and the gun was otherwise undamaged. It was badly corroded. O icers were investigating the circumstances for the outside possibility that if there was foul play, the murderer might have thrown it over the cli to simulate a natural fall. Chandler’s body had rolled several feet beyond the gun and lodged against a tree.” Clearly the circumstances at the scene had disturbed the sheri . I would say that finding the rifle stuck in the ground was highly unusual and almost simulates an e ort to throw it.

Mr. Chandler’s body did go through a coroner’s inquest. He was found to have a head injury, described in the December 7, 1938, Greeley

Tribune: “The doctors reported that the skull fracture had been caused by a large blunt instrument which could have been caused by falling on a rock.” The doctors stated that death was instantaneous.

Mrs. Chandler didn’t believe the coroner’s conclusions because of her husband’s background and his knowledge of the outdoors. She hired a private investigator who worked the case for several weeks, but he did not produce anything of value that made it to the newspapers.

Summary

Fourteen months after he disappeared, Floyd Chandler was found by a trapper who had a cabin in the area. The trapper stated that he walked over a log and found the body. He told the paper that the body had not decomposed much. The December 6, 1938, article in the Greeley Tribune had this description of his find: “William G. Ferris, a 43 year old trapper who has a cabin about three miles from the spot, stumbled onto the body a mile above the confluence of the Little South Poudre and the main Poudre River.” The body was found in an area that had previously been searched. The coroner’s inquest found that Mr. Chandler had died accidentally from a fall. I don’t think Mrs. Chandler agreed with the findings.

Harold L. Mercer

Missing: 11/05/38, Walsenburg, CO

Age at disappearance: 38 years

Weather» Point of Separation» Aircraft Crash

This story has a little bit of everything. In past books I have explained that three years into studying the stories of missing people matching our profile, I started to keep track of the number of times search helicopters and airplanes crashed. The numbers seemed high. After reading this story, you can add another crash to that list.

Harold L. Mercer was a cafe owner in Pueblo, Colorado, a town south of Colorado Springs. On November 5,1938, Harold went with two friends and made the drive forty miles south to a location called Peterson Canyon, thirty-five miles northeast of Walsenburg. This is an isolated area of open plains without significant ground cover. The trio went out to hunt rabbits.

Late in the day, something unexpected happened to the hunters, as is explained in this November 19 article in the Pueblo Indicator: “Mercer

was with two other hunters. A violent snowstorm came up and the two companions left for town in their car after having made a casual search for the third hunter." That's right: the article stated "casual search." If there was a major storm hitting that area, there is no shelter in this region. If you leave your partner out in that weather, he's dead. This is a good example of why you pick your hunting partners wisely.

Other articles at the time state that Mercer somehow got separated from his companions. His friends went into town and got the assistance of the Pueblo County sheri . There was another mishap in conjunction with the search, as is described in a November 12 article in the Greeley Daily Tribune: "Neither Andy Andrews of Colorado Springs, the pilot, nor Robert Leech, the passenger, was injured. But the plane was badly damaged. The two had been making daily flights over the district where Mercer disappeared a week ago while rabbit hunting, aiding a ground crew numbering from 150-300 each day. Leech, telephoning from the ranch of Sherman Cox, near White Rock, informed Sheri Worker of the mishap. Roberts indicated the plane's motor failed, necessitating a landing in the rugged canyon district." For decades many strange things have happened in the open plains—in the sky and on the ground—of this area of Colorado. I have documented several aircraft crashes in conjunction with a search for missing people.

On November 19, the formal search was initially terminated because of weather issues. On December 5, a sheepherder named Balbino Perea stated that he'd had strong visions where Mercer was located. He actually convinced the sheri to head up a small canyon and search for another two days. They found nothing. There was no evidence to indicate Mercer's possible location after eleven months of friends, family, and professional searchers scouring a huge region of the prairie.

On October 1,1939, something very unusual happened, as is described in this October 2, 1939, article in the Atchison Daily Globe: "Three boys hunting rabbits in sparsely settled southeastern Pueblo County found Mercer's body yesterday about ten miles from where his companions last saw him. Coroner C. N. Caldwell said Mercer died of exhaustion."

The area where Mercer vanished would not be considered mountains. It was rolling plains. According to Robert Koester's book, Lost Person Behavior, a hunter will be found 95 percent of the time in an 8.5-mile radius from the point last seen. Considering that Mercer was lost in a

blizzard, the idea he made it ten miles seems pretty phenomenal.

Another fact from the article that you will not see in any modern-day newspaper is the description of someone dying from exhaustion. I've only seen this cause of death in articles sixty to seventy years old.

Lastly, it is surprising to me that Mercer's body wasn't found by the airplane while it was flying for two days. A body lying on the ground in that specific part of Colorado seems as though it would've stuck out.

Clyde Dillon ■ inxi.'

Missing: 10/05/41, Meeker, CO . ˛ˆ !

Age at disappearance: 45 years

Weather» Previously Searched» Point of Separation» hunter

Colorado has notoriety to hunters for their big deer, great hunting and high altitude landscape. The region around Meeker is known for its elk herds and brings large numbers of sportsmen from throughout the world to track the big game.

Clyde Dillon was an executive for a grocery chain in Hutchinson, Kansas. He drove to Meeker Colorado to hunt elk with friend R.S. Prosch. They had made prior arrangements to base out of a hunting camp in Big Springs near Piceanse Creek, southwest of Meeker. On October 5, 1941, Clyde decided he wanted to hunt another area and got into his car and drove the dirt road from his camp towards another camp fifteen miles away at a ranch (Point of Separation). Just as he was leaving snow started to fall, and a blizzard developed. Clyde was supposed to return to his camp the night he left, and he didn't. R.S. got concerned and contacted the Rio Blanco County Sheri , Chester Mead.

A search was immediately initiated, and they eventually found Clyde's car three miles down the road stuck in deep snow. They determined that the vehicle was out of gas and it had appeared that Clyde had stayed in the car with the heater going and the car stuck. Once the car ran out of fuel, he exited and hiked somewhere, leaving his rifle behind. It was at this point that the sheri established his search point.

Rio Blanco County Undersheri Roy Harper was placed in charge of the e ort to locate Clyde. He rallied dozens of other hunters in the area and later contacted the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) that was in

White River to assist. In total, over 100 searchers were combing the mountains looking for the Kansas resident. The sheri commented that they were hampered in their e orts to locate Clyde because there was a lack of horses available. The one thousand hunters that were in the Meeker area had been utilizing horses to travel into the, and in most instances, they were unable to contact them.

The disappearance reached Hutchinson, and Clyde's wife and brother immediately left and set up their camp in Rifle, Colorado. One friend brought a plane that participated in the search e ort.

On October 11, 1941, United States Federal Circuit Judge from Kansas Walter Huxman contacted Colorado Governor Ralph Carr. Judge Huxman explained that he was a good friend of Clyde's brother and was requesting that everything is done to locate the hunter. Governor Carr contacted the Rio Blanco Sheri and inquired about the search e ort and said he would come to Rifle to speak to the family. The sheri told Carr that everything that could be done was being done. Carr asked if they needed more searchers in the mountains? The governor was told if searchers didn't know the area, they would have more people getting lost.

On October 17, 1941, a psychic sent a telegram to the Iola Register with the following information about where Clyde would be located, "Dillon could be found at the end of or under a bridge 14 miles from the spot where the automobile was found. It was signed "Crystal Reader." The sheri sent searchers to an area that matched the description and found nothing.

There were several headlines that stated, "Searchers Ba led." The dozens of people in the woods looking for Clyde were not finding anything. An October 22, 1941 article in the Arizona Republic had this headline, "Hunt for Lost Man Hampered." Snow and rain had inundated the search area and shut down much of the field e ort to locate Mr. Dillon.

The search for Clyde Dillon continued for almost five weeks, an almost unprecedented amount of time for 1941. The number of rugged hunters, deputies and CCC workers was approaching one hundred. There was also a small group of women that were wives of the hunters was staying at the original camp where Clyde had stayed. The November 10, 1941 edition of the Fremont Tribune had these stunning details, "The body of Clyde Dillon was prepared for shipment back to Hitchinson Kansas today after three women stumbled over it yesterday only a mile from the hunting camp where the 45-year old

hunter disappeared 38 days ago. Joining the search, the women combed the same territory that a posse of veteran mountaineers had gone over four times looking for evidence of the chain grocer. One of Dillon's glasses was broken but o icials said he apparently died either from exhaustion or a heart attack. His body was in good condition, Sheri Mead said."

A coroner's jury was quickly employed on November 11. It determined that Clyde died from exposure and exhaustion. It stated that the body was located between two bushes and on horse trail within a mile of where his automobile was located. The location that the jury described where the body was found di ered from the news article of November 10.

The Clyde Dillon story exemplifies the profile points established in our research. How would it be possible for searchers, who often take trails to travel in the mountains could've missed Clyde's body while it was on a path used by horsemen? News articles explained that this area was searched at least four times. Weather played a role in getting Clyde's vehicle stuck and in the search e ort to locate the hunter. Hunters that separate themselves from others have a very high incidence of disappearing.

Norris Head

Missing: 10/30/56, Rainbow Lake, CO

Age at disappearance: 26 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Hunter

Hunters from around the world travel to Colorado in an attempt to bag a trophy elk. Many do not realize that hunting above eight thousand feet comes with many dangers, mainly, the change in weather can be deadly and the majority have no idea what to do if trapped in a raging blizzard.

Norris Head was a truck driver from Gilroy California, a small city thirty miles south from San Jose. There was a total of four hunters who joined Norris in the Colorado mountains to hunt big game. The group chose the Elk Wilderness twenty miles north of Gunnison as their hunting grounds.

On October 30, 1956 Norris and his group went into the mountains in the Elk Wilderness near Rainbow Lake. The lake has an elevation of 10.960 feet. A hunter coming from Gilroy, California will have di

iculty acclimating to an elevation above 10,000 feet.

As Norris was hunting with his partners, a blizzard moved into the area and the group somehow got separated. His partners looked for him for hours, they almost got lost and made their way back to their vehicle. They drove into Gunnison and told the sheri they needed assistance to find their friend.

Sheri George Cope took responsibility for finding Norris. Hundreds of local ranchers, hunters and the Western College Ski Team participated in the search for Norris Head. The SAR e ort lasted seven days without finding anything.

The fact that Norris vanished in the Elk Wilderness, no motor vehicles can enter the area. Only searchers on foot or horseback are allowed into a wilderness.

Reports from the scene indicated the storm that hit the hunting grounds on October 30, 1956, was sudden and fierce.

There were several subsequent searches for Norris, he was never found.

Janice Okeson

Missing: 11/06/77, Ouray, CO

Age at disappearance: 21 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

The city and county that takes center stage in this incident is Ouray, Colorado. The city with the county's name sits eighty air miles south of Grand Junction in eastern Colorado. It's the only city I've ever researched that boasts three distinct nicknames. It is called the "Switzerland of America" because it sits in a narrow valley at an elevation of 7,792 feet surrounded on three sides by peaks nearing 13,000 feet. It also claims recognition as the "Jeep Capital of the World." Every fall the Jeep Jamboree is held in the city and owners travel from around the world to drive the dirt roads in the surrounding mountains. It is a huge event. In the winter months, the city promotes itself as the "Ice Climbing Capital of the United States." Climbers from around North America come to the region because of the diverse types of ice climbing that are present in the creeks and rivers of the area.

The Ute Indians first settled Ouray. In 1875, gold and silver mining took o in the valley. At the height of gold and silver exploration, the region had over thirty mines. The town was incorporated on October 2, 1876, and chose their name from the famous Ute Indian chief Ouray.

Janet Okeson

On November 6, 1977, newlyweds Steve and Janice Okeson were elk hunting the region northwest of Highway 550, six miles north of Ouray. Steve later reported that he and Janice got separated while hunting, but it wasn't clear how. He searched for her a short while and then sought assistance from the sheri .

Steve Okeson reported that Janice was wearing a heavy parka and boots and carrying a rifle. The sheri got the report of the disappearance, and he called the Colorado Search and Rescue Organization.

Search authorities put massive amounts of resources into finding Janice. A November 11, 1977, article in the Utah Daily Herald had these details: "At one point 118 ground searchers, Bloodhounds, a Colorado Civil Air Patrol plane, and two helicopters from Fort Carson looked for the woman. Holloway said Bloodhounds picked up Mrs. Okeson's trail once, but soon lost it. Ground crews and air searchers found no trace of the woman." Other articles stated that the military helicopters had airlifted ground searchers and dog teams to nearby mountaintops where they were dropped to search down the slopes. They found nothing.

Temperatures in the area plunged after Janice vanished. Teams stated that they were challenged at night because of the freezing temperatures. In spite of the cold weather, SAR teams maintained during the ten-day search that Janice could've survived that time frame. They did state that four-foot snowdrifts inhibited searchers' abilities to move through the area, as it would've also restricted Janice's movement. After the formal search was terminated, family and friends continued to search the area for several more days. The family and friends found nothing.

As best I can tell from my research, Janice was never found. Janice's family put a marker at her grave stating, "In Loving Memory, Janice Lynn Okeson, 1956-1977."

Coming across the disappearance of Janice from the area north of Ouray wasn't the first time I learned of and wrote about someone vanishing from that region under unusual circumstances. North of Ouray is the small ranching community of Ridgeway. In the early 1900s a small boy vanished from his rural ranch home. There was a massive search, as many of the four thousand residents of the sur-z rounding region responded to the request for assistance. It should be noted that the vast majority of all two-year-olds will be found within a radius of two miles from where they were last seen. The massive search failed to find the boy. Law enforcement at the time stated that he must've been kidnapped. The theory made no sense because the family could see anyone coming up their ranch road, and nobody came to visit during the times in question. One month after he vanished, he was found deceased twelve miles away in a willow swamp by a cowboy wrangling cattle. There was never a clear explanation of what happened. Refer to Missing 411: The Devil's in the Detail for the full story.

There are very few stories in my books where women go hunting with their husbands and then disappear. This is a very unusual case because there were never any reports of gunshots heard, something Janice would've done if she needed assistance. The gunfire would've garnered attention. It's been almost forty years since Janice vanished. I have not read about any discovery of her clothing, rifle, or her remains. She was a young and healthy woman; I can't imagine what may have happened.

William R. "Russ" Lyons

Missing: 10/11/86, Sliderock Mountain, Durango, CO

Age at disappearance: 51 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

Elk hunting in Colorado generates huge income for the state. The average out-of-state hunter will pay at least $600 for an elk-hunting license. According to the Fort Collins Coloradoan, Colorado businesses generate $2.8 billion per year on hunting and fishing activities. In 2012-13 Colorado Parks and Wildlife stated they generated $110 million from fishing and hunting licenses. It is big business, and because of that, they don't want you to know the extreme dan-gers associated with the sport. Elk hunting in the fall and winter months of Colorado can be extremely dangerous. This story deals with a man that served our country into retirement and was trained to live in extreme conditions. William Lyons was raised in Plattsburgh, New York. He later moved to Rantoul, Illinois, and then in 1979 to Arizona, settling in Glendale. He was a man with worldly experience. He had served in the US Air Force, doing two tours of duty in Vietnam, fee had also served in Thai es of heavy, wet snow had fallen since Friday, and there had been several small avalanches in the search area, which is at an elevation of 10,200 feet."

The formal SAR for William lasted only three full days. Extreme weather took a toll on the contingent of people who risked their lives to find the hunter. All e orts to locate Mr. Lyons were terminated on October 14. Many articles stated that searchers were working in cold weather that got down to eight degrees on many days.

La Plata o icials stated that they believed William was dead. They explained that he was carrying a .38-caliber revolver and a rifle with many shells. They said that he would have known to fire multiple rounds if he was in trouble and his friends would go to him. No shots were ever heard. They also said that if he were alive, he would be moving and his tracks would've been seen in the fresh snow. Searches never found any human tracks.

In November 1986, William's family had a memorial for him in Arizona. It was obvious from comments from his children that his family loved William immensely. The obituary stated that he was a longtime member of the St. Helen's Catholic Church in Glendale. He was a proud father of three and a grandfather to four.

Richard Harkins

Missing: 09/07/2015, Sand Mountain, CO

Age at disappearance: 43 years

Bow Hunter* Point of Separation* Canines

Richard Harkins was a Minnesota resident that split residential time between Duluth and Lake Vermillion. He was a single man that treasured his time in the outdoors and was a very experienced hunter. He worked as a sales representative for a motorcycle and snowmobile manufacturer.

In early September 2015, Richard left Minnesota and traveled to Denver and onto Steamboat Springs for bow hunting. He met up with three friends, and they established a hunting camp in the Routt National Forest approximately twenty-two air miles north of Steamboat Springs. The specific area was west of Steamboat Lake near Sand Mountain and Meaden Peak. They were at their camp on Sunday, September 6.

While researching this book, I found some startling di erences in the various articles that were written about this event. A September 11, 2015, article in the Steamboat Today stated the following: “He went hunting on his own at 7:30 a.m. Monday morning and never returned to camp. His hunting partners reported him missing Tuesday night.” If this is true, I wouldn’t be really comfortable with the action of my fellow hunters. If Richard didn’t come back that Monday night, why wouldn’t the hunters have gone for help Tuesday morning?

Before you rush to judgment, hold on. The undersheri of Routt County, Ray Birch, gave an interview with the following supposed facts. On September 12,2015, The Pioneer Press of Minnesota stated the following: “Birch said it appeared that Harkins stayed in camp Monday morning when the rest of the party went out hunting in the ‘very rugged’ terrain. He exchanged a text message with a fellow member of the camp that afternoon, but was not heard from again.” Later this article states that his hunting party reported him missing on Tuesday. Here are two articles with distinctly di erent renditions of what happened. One fact is sure. Richard went missing.

The Routt County Sheri responded in force. An article in the Steamboat Today of September 11, 2015, explained what searchers found: “On Thursday two search dogs from Grand County were brought in to help. ‘They had a pretty strong scent indication, which is consistent with the direction of travel, which is southwest Sand Mountain,’ Routt County undersheri Ray Birch stated Thursday night. More specifically, Harkins scent was found along Armstrong Creek

headed toward California Park.” Remember this statement.

Air force helicopters in the search were using forward-looking infrared radar (FLIR), which picks up body heat. They—not one helicopter, but three—saw nothing of value. Canines did not find Richard, and professional searchers with canines did not find Richard. In fact, a professional searcher never found the hunter; rather, a volunteer located the body.

A later edition of the Steamboat Today for September 11 included this revealing statement: “Routt County Undersheri Ray Birch said Harkins, who was known as an avid outdoorsman, was found close to his camp along US Forest Road 480 by someone who had volunteered to help with the search. ‘He wasn’t that far from camp. Maybe a couple hundred yards,’ Birch said. I don’t have a lot of details how he was found.” Let’s read that again. Richard was found two hundred yards from camp near a forest-service road. How did multiple dog teams miss the body? A more bothersome question: how could the chief law enforcement o icer in charge of Richard’s search not know the details surrounding the finding of the body? Wouldn’t that be a primary point to understand?

The body was taken to the Routt County coroner’s o ice for autopsy. The headlines for the September 16, 2015, edition of the Steamboat Today read: “Cause of Death for Missing Hunter Still Unclear.” The coroner was having a di icult time understanding what killed Richard. Weeks later the coroner came out and stated that he died of altitude sickness.

It is a huge concern to me that multiple news agencies get the facts so incredibly wrong. When citizens read the articles, they are left in a quandary about who and what to believe. There is one consistency in all of the articles. A volunteer found the body just two hundred yards from his camp after four days of searching. In my past books, I have detailed numerous reports of people who disappeared and were found in areas that had been searched multiple times. This is not to incriminate and cast a shadow on search-and-rescue workers. It does not appear from the data and supporting evidence that the body was there when searched. Multiple canines should not all miss something so obvious and so close to the point last seen.

Florida

Name Date Missing*Age* Sex

Charles Hu 11/24/2004, 6:00 p.m.76-M

Charles Hu

Missing: 11/24/2004, 6:00 p.m., Green Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Sumpter, FL

Age at disappearance: 76 years

Canines* Weather

Charles and Shirley Hu lived in Kathleen, Florida, approximately fifteen miles northeast of Tampa and ten miles south of the Green Swamp Wildlife Management Area. The Hu s had been married since 1972, and it was the second marriage for each. Shirley had four grown daughters, and the entire family was very tight. Charles was an Ohio native that came to Florida and gained employment in the United States Navy. He later worked as a truck driver and later as a part-time security guard.

It was the Wednesday before Thanksgiving in 2004 when Shirley got up early and headed for work at a photo processing plant. Charles took a frozen chicken out of the freezer and placed it in the sink to thaw. Charles had told Shirley that he and Todd Tharrington (his son-in-law) were going hunting Thanksgiving morning in the Green Swamp, and Shirley clearly told him not to go out there alone. It appears he didn't listen.

Shirley arrived home at near 6:00 p.m. and found the spoiled chicken in the sink. Charles wasn't home. She searched the house and found that his Ruger M77 rifle was missing, which indicated to her that he went hunting. Shirley started calling her daughters and their husbands for assistance. The spoiled chicken indicated to Shirley that Charles had intended on being home in a reasonable amount of time. Charles didn't make it.

Todd Tharrington and Rob Gri in (another son-in-law) arrived at the Hu residence and started to think through where Charles may have gone. Todd remembered a time when he and Charles had gone fishing in the Green Swamp and decided to drive to the area and see if he could find the man's truck. On Thanksgiving morning, Todd drove to the spot where he and Charles had fished and started to search the region. The main road into this area was Tonic Grade, and it was o this dirt road, in a small turnout, that he found Charles's pickup. Todd yelled, screamed, and quickly searched the surrounding area but could not find his father-in-law.

This is a brief description of the Green Swamp Wildlife Area, which is taken directly from the Florida Fish and Wildlife website:

Green Swamp WMA consists of 50,692 acres in Lake, Polk, and Sumter counties. Also known as Green Swamp East, this area is part of the approximately 110,000 acres purchased to protect the land and water resources of the Green Swamp Basin. Green Swamp is a critical recharge area for the Floridian aquifer as well as the source of the Hillsborough, Withlacoochee, Ocklawaha, and Peace rivers. Most of the landscape is pine flatwoods, cypress domes, and hardwoods swamps. Freshwater fishing is good along this segment of the Withlacoochee River. Stanley Fish Hole and Maynard Mines, both accessed from SR 471, are popular fishing spots. Paddling on the Withlacoochee east of SR 471 is not recommended due to the poorly defined channel and numerous logjams. Deer, hog, and turkey hunting are good, although high water makes hunting and other recreational activities di icult at times. More than 20 miles of the Florida Trail, 13.1 miles of which are part of the Florida National Scenic Trail, traverse the area. Portions of the trail are inundated in all but the driest years. Over 20 miles of unpaved service roads are marked for bicycling. Wildlife that may be seen on the area include alligator, white-tailed deer, bobwhite quail, armadillo, gray squirrels, feral hogs, and a variety of birds. Camping is permitted year round at designated campsites and along the Florida Trail.

The Green Swamp is in the jurisdiction of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Department, yet straddles two Florida counties, Polk and Sumter. Todd and Rob called law enforcement when they found Charles's 1994 white Mazda pickup. Soon the area was swarming with search-and-rescue personnel. It wasn't long before searchers brought Bloodhounds to the scene. Rob and Todd were still at the pickup when searchers asked Rob for something from Chuck that had his scent on it for the dogs to track. The following statement is from the Lakeland Ledger of February 27, 2006: "Gri in, 48, broke a window of Hu 's locked truck to get a pair of sneakers, which gave the dogs a focal scent. But a heavy rain the night before wiped out not only footprints but also olfactory clues." Searchers had their dogs attempt to track, but they walked in circles. The sheri 's department and wildlife management put all-terrain vehicles into the area to search, along with equestrians, hikers, helicopters, and many volunteer searchers.

After ten days of intensive searching, the Hu family gave permission to the search teams to terminate their e orts. The search for Charles produced no clues, no footprints, no scent trails: nothing to indicate the man was in the area. In the same Lake Ledger article, Charles's

son-in law Rob Gri in made the following statement: “Rob Gri in, a lawyer, said it’s unlikely searchers could have missed Charles in the section of the Green Swamp they had covered on foot. Gri in said that leaves two possibilities: Hu wandered a long distance before succumbing, or he was a victim of someone who carried him far from the truck.” The family has made public statements that they feel that foul play is involved in Charles’s disappearance.

Summary

I believe there are a few clues that point to what may have happened to Charles. Charles removed the chicken from the freezer because he had intended to return home to fix dinner. He did take his Ruger rifle with him and changed into his boots when he reached the swamp, indicating he was probably going into the area to hunt or scout the area for hunting the following day. I believe this indicated he was going into the Green Swamp for three or four hours and then planned to return home.

It’s always a very dangerous proposition to attempt to rob someone who is armed. If someone did attack or rob Charles, this means he or she took the body and disposed of it many miles from the Green Swamp, or cadaver dogs would have reacted to that scent. Helicopters with forward-looking infrared radar scouted the swamp and did not find any heat signatures from an injured person or a recently deceased human.

This case does have many elements of other missing persons cases, including swamps, Bloodhounds not finding a scent, bad weather, and hunting alone.

Georgia

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Chuck Logan Jr. 12/20/2003, 2:00 p.m.41*M

Chuck Logan Jr.

Missing: 12/20/2003, 2:00 p.m., Phinizy Swamp, GA

Age at disappearance: 41 years

Canine* Previously Searched

This story could be placed in either a Georgia or South Carolina

chapter as it occurred right on the border five miles southeast of Augusta. This is a rare story as it involves a duck hunter, something I've rarely covered in any book. On December 20, 2003, Chuck Logan Jr. lived alone. He had a good life, was single, and enjoyed the outdoors. He shared his residence with his black Labrador, Bishop. The two went almost ev-erywhere together. Early in the morning, Chuck and Bishop left their home and headed for an area five miles southeast of Augusta, directly on the South Carolina border. They pulled into the public parking lot to access the Phinizy Swamp and Wildlife Area. He parked directly adjacent to the Messerly Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The pair walked into the swamp, and Chuck placed six duck decoys in the area behind the water treatment plant, an area where sportsmen regularly hunted fowl. At 2:00 p.m. he made a call to the business of a family friend, arranging a ride. He also had received a call from someone answering a newspaper ad he'd placed for a room that he had for rent. In follow-up investigations the police did days after he vanished, various news agencies reported that the person calling stated that a child had answered his phone. It was never confirmed if that person had called the correct number.

Chuck never came out of the swamp and was reported as a missing person. Police responding to a request to check the area of the water treatment plant did find his car parked in the public area with Bishop sitting nearby.

Law enforcement believed Chuck had to be somewhere in the swamp. A February 1,2005, article in the Augusta Chronicle detailed the e ort: "In all, more than 9000 man-hours went into searching the 1500 acre public hunting area. Wildlife Resources Division rangers used volunteers, boats and aircraft, and specially trained dogs combed the area for any scent of human remains. 'If he was in there, somebody would have found him,' Mrs. Logan-Pace said." This was a monumental e ort to find Chuck, and a very to-the-point statement made about finding him.

In the subsequent investigation, law enforcement went to Chuck's home on Washington Road in north Augusta, approximately one mile from the Savannah River. They found the home as you'd expect: food in the cabinets, water in Bishop's bowl, nothing out of place.

Eventually the e ort to locate Chuck had to stop. The search found nothing: no gun, no clothing, just six of his decoys in the water, meaning he was still hunting when he vanished.

The following two years supplied the time and the missing person for theories to run wild. Some individuals believed that Chuck was the victim of foul play. Some believed he had come out of the swamp and something happened near his car. I don't understand any of the theories that say he had come out of the swamp as his decoys were still there. If a hunter is working a public area, everyone knows that you'll pull your decoys when you leave because you don't want them stolen.

As someone who has investigated hundreds of cases where the victim vanishes with his or her dog, the vast majority show a consistent behavior regarding man's best friend. If searchers find the body of the victim, the dog is sitting next to him or her. If the body isn't in the area and cannot be immediately found, the dog is either back at the original camp, at the car, or running wild in the area. It's almost as though if the dog can't stay and watch the body, it leaves the immediate area.

As in the majority of these cases after no clues are found, law enforcement turns to foul play. They start looking at homicide and so forth. There were allegations that Chuck was living in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Maggie Valley, North Carolina. All of these accusations were found to be baseless.

No progress was made on this investigation until early 2006. A January 15, 2006, article in the Augusta Herald had this news blast:

"Police said that they believe the hunters have found the skeletal remains of Mr. Logan in an area of the swamp behind the Messerly Water Treatment Plant near Doug Barnard Parkway. His car had been found parked in a lot near the plant." The article explained that a group of duck hunters led by Michael Walden of Martinez had gone into the area early on January 14 and brought along his Labrador retriever, named Madison. They were approximately five hundred yards from the back of the water treatment plant when the dog started sni ing. The group went toward the odor and found camouflaged clothing in the water and bones inside. This was in chest-deep water. The hunters called the sheri , and the Augusta-Richmond Dive Team responded and recovered the body. It was stated in the article that you could hear cars on the roadway from where the body was found. The same article quoted above included the following: "we searched every inch of this swamp. I can't believe it's so close, and we didn't bring him home earlier,' he said. 'We kept searching out deep in the swamp...for him to be so close is devastating that we passed by that location so many times,' Ms. Logan- Pace said."

I could find no publicly released statement of the cause of death by the coroner.

Many articles stated that searchers were shocked to learn about where Chuck had been found. Nine thousand hours of searching and searching by aircraft and no one ever saw any indicators of the body's location. Cadaver dogs were used days after he disappeared. When a body goes underwater, as decomposition occurs, the body disperses small bubbles of odor that the canines are trained to hit on. Multiple canine teams brought to the area never indicated any odor in the area. The shock level of friends, family, and law enforcement over the circumstances of the recovery must be acknowledged. This does not make sense.

Law enforcement and family members reiterated in the years before the body was located that every inch of the swamp's fifteen hundred acres had been searched multiple times. Many of the articles were strongly hinting that law enforcement was leaning toward foul play or a voluntary disappearance. I think that many people were shocked where Chuck was found.

Idaho

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

George Smith 11/04/1911* 45*M

Ruben Kleweno 11/30/26* 27*M

Judd McWilliams 09/15/48* 82*M

Eddie Grant 10/05/49* 22*M

Roy Agee 10/01/51,4:00 p.m.* 63*M

Bryan Warner 10/01/51* Unk* M

James Madison 09/11/52-6 :00 p.m. *67*M

Lemar Pepmuller 11/21/53* 22*M

Charles Miller Jr. 10/10/54* 25*M

Ronald Hu ord 10/01/56* 28*M

Ted Nalman 09/07/59* 14*M

Fred Vinneau 10/06/60*84*M

Fred Dorsey 10/21/61* 19*M

Virgil Mulck 10/24/62* 55*M

Martin Woodward 11/17/63,2:00 p.m.* 22*M

Lowell Smith 10/05/68* 60*M

James Schroeder 09/25/82,3:00 p.m.* 23*M

Susan Seymour Adams 09/30/90* 42*F

Brian Sines 11/22/91* 29*M

Richard Bendele 11/17/96, 6:00 p.m.* 29*M

Ronald S. Gray 09/19/2008* 62*M

Connie Johnson 10/05/18* 76*F

Terrence Woods 10/05/18*26*M

George Smith

Missing: 11/04/1911, Grangeville, ID

Age at disappearance: 45 years

Point of Separation* Cluster Zone

George Smith was a farmer that had little time to break away from his work to enjoy the outdoors. He lived fifteen miles north of Grangeville in Ferdinand.

In early November 1911, George traveled from his farm to meet three friends in Grangeville for elk hunting. The group gathered and traveled twenty-five miles south to a hunting location called Adams Camp- This region of the Nez Perce National Forest is infamous for giant elk, erratic weather, and dead bodies.

On November 4, 1911, in the early-morning hours, the group discussed their hunt and plans. George told them that he preferred to hunt alone and that he'd be back by dusk. George didn't make it back.

Before you jump to conclusions in this incident, remember how di

icult it would be to travel twenty-five miles through the mountains in 1911. It was brutal.

When George didn't come back, the trio of friends decided to try to retrace what steps they could find and locate their friend. The group did have some success: they found a wrapper that George had put his sandwich in, that's all they found. The group stayed with it for three days. They struggled through brutally cold weather with fifteen inches of snow on the ground. The group made it back to Grangeville and got more assistance. The final search culminated ten days after Smith vanished. They found nothing.

A November 14, 1911, article in the Spokane Chronicle summarized the region where Smith vanished: "If Smith is dead, he will be but one more on a long list of men who have lost their lives in the hilly region 25 miles south of here." I can only imagine how many hunters vanished prior to 1911 in this area. It is very di icult to research deaths in the 1800s and early 1900s. You will read about other incidents that occurred in this area later in this chapter.

Ruben Kleweno

Missing: 11/30/26, six miles north of Harvard, ID

Age at disappearance: 27 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

Ruben Kleweno was a single man working his parents' farm in Genesee, Idaho, just three miles east of the Washington border. He was described as very physically fit and an experienced woodsman and hunter.

On November 30, 1926, Ruben was at his deer-hunting camp on the north side of Strychnine Creek six miles north of Harvard in the Saint Joe National Forest. It was the last day of hunting season, and spirits were high. Ruben was hunting with three of his friends, Joe and Jones McCowan and Jay Rohn. At 9:00 a.m. the men decided they were going to separate and meet back at camp that night. As darkness fell, Ruben didn't return. His friends weren't concerned and believed he may have killed an animal and was field dressing it. By the next morning, he still hadn't returned, and they left to get assistance.

Residents of Harvard and Genesee came out en masse to search for the local man. Hundreds of searchers inundated the region and combed the mountains for days. Heavy, surprising fog hit the area, and articles

stated that this inhibited the e ort to locate the man. As the search continued, the fog left and heavy rains started. The rains caused the water levels in creeks and rivers to rise, and this concerned searchers.

Law enforcement stated that they were focusing on a small stream called the Palouse River, where they felt Ruben had been hunting. Several search teams built massive fires on hilltops so that Ruben would know where to find safety. This didn't work. A December 2 article in the Spokesman Review explained other search e orts that were initiated: "Thursday the bird dog owned by young Kleweno was sent for to aid in the search, while Bloodhounds from the penitentiary in Walla Walla were being brought to Harvard in an e ort to help trace the missing man. Kleweno is said to be very familiar with the woods and friends say that unless he is injured he would be able to strike either of the two streams or the forest road, any of which he could easily follow out of the timber."

An extensive two-week search to find Ruben failed. They didn't find anything to even indicate he was in the region. There was no new information about this case for decades.

On July 9, 1948, a group from the Blister Rust Control Program was working an area 350 yards east of US Highway 95E and found a skull. This was just north of Harvard. The group contacted the sheri , and a search was conducted. Law enforcement found a pelvic rib, thigh bones, and the deteriorated sole of a shoe. The sheri made statements that this might be the remains of Ruben. The remains were sent to the coroner for analysis. I could not find any other articles stating that the remains were identified.

Let's review why this case is relevant. Two types of weather hampered search e orts. Fog and heavy rain were in the area while the search was being conducted. Two di erent types of dogs were brought to the scene. Ruben's dog and Bloodhounds from the prison couldn't find him.

Judd McWilliams

Missing: 9/15/48, forty miles southeast of Lewiston, ID

Age at disappearance: 82 years

Cluster Zone

Judd McWilliams moved to his ranch in Middle Bench, Idaho, over fifty years prior to his disappearance on September 15, 1948. He

raised a family, and the family moved out of the area, leaving just Judd.

That day (9/15/48), neighbors went to the residence and could not locate Mr. McWilliams. Neighbors soon realized that they hadn't seen the eighty-two-year-old man in several days, and they contacted his son, Don, who was living in San Francisco, California. Don hired a private investigator to continue the search for his dad, which the county terminated after just a few days of searching and finding nothing.

After several days of searching, the private investigator found Judd's rifle on his land amid a series of downed logs deep into his property. A thorough search of the area failed to find any evidence of what happened to the eighty-two-year-old rancher. I completed a long-term archival search without finding any resolution to the disappearance of Judd.

Summary

The private investigator did a remarkable job of finding Mr. McWilliams's rifle one-quarter of a mile from his residence. Finding the rifle among downed logs can mean several things, but I believe that it does confirm that Judd was out in that area hunting for something when something tragic and overwhelming happened. There were never reports of a crime scene or of blood, hair, or tissue found, which would tell us if a large predator jumped Judd. We may never know what happened to him. It almost appears as though Judd was snatched and was forced to drop the firearm.

It is also an unusual coincidence that Judd's rifle was found in an area of downed logs, a region where missing children are often found. There was some reason that the victim was carrying his rifle, what was he afraid of encountering?

Eddie Grant

Missing: 10/05/49, thirty miles east of Grangeville, ID Age at disappearance: 22 years

Cluster Zone» Point of Separation» Canines» Missing Clothing

I have written about this area of Idaho in Missing 411: Western United States. There are other hunters and hikers that have disappeared in the Nez Perce National Forest under highly unusual circumstances. The exact location of this incident is thirty miles east of Grangeville,

near the Montana border. The forest in the area of Pilot Knob (where this occurred) is mostly old-growth forest and very thick.

On October 5, 1949, in the afternoon hours, Eddie Grant was in a mountainside hunting camp when he told friends William McMahon and Bill Young he was going out to hunt on his own. When Eddie didn't return that night, an extensive search was initiated.

Almost from the start of the search, the Idaho National Guard participated in a huge way. There were also military personnel from Lewiston that responded and committed to the search. The military flew multiple aerial reconnaissance missions of the area, and Bloodhounds responded and covered the ground in an e ort to find a scent. It was reported by multiple news sources that the canines never found a scent. An October 17, 1949, article in the Lewiston Morning Tribune had the following details about the feeling of search authorities: "Meanwhile, Glenn Ailor, Grangeville, Idaho, county coroner, suggested Grant may have met with foul play. He said an investigation of that possibility was in progress. Ailor declared the region where Grant was last seen, near Baldy Mountain, about 30 miles east of here is country a man could easily walk out of." A statement like this from a public authority is sobering. This means it is generally felt that something unusual happened to Eddie.

On the thirty-ninth day of searching for Eddie Grant, his friends made a stunning find. A November 16, 1949, article in the Spokes-man Review had this: "The 39 day search for Eddie Grant is over. A trio of searchers, Marvin and Milton Grant and Earl Pea, found the body of the 22-year-old Gi ord hunter where he had apparently tripped over a tree limb, fell to the ground too exhausted to rise again to his feet and died of exposure. His rifle, chaps, hat, hunting knife and scabbard were gone, presumably left somewhere along his aimless trail. His boots had been slashed open and his feet were severely wounded, apparently due to the desperate e orts of a frantic man to relieve pressure on his feet, swollen by miles of wandering aimlessly in search of civilization." The body was found in an unnamed creek on the northwest slope of Baldy Mountain, just one and a half miles from the hunting camp. Searchers did find one eight-millimeter expended cartridge one mile from the body.

Summary

Eddie's friends and family should be commended for never giving up on finding their friend and relative. The first questions that came to mind when I read this was, why would anyone remove his chaps?

Also, a hunter knows that his rifle is his lifeline to survival and signaling searchers; why dispose of it? Searchers stated that Eddie's boots had been "slashed" open. Why would his boots be opened in that manner when you could just untie them? How could Eddie have slashed his boots open if he didn't have a knife? If your boots are bothering you while hiking, you don't loosen them; you tighten them, especially if you are in cold weather. If Eddie's feet were mangled, maybe he wasn't wearing boots while he was hiking?

Eddie was found on the side of a mountain in a creek. If Eddie was on one of the tallest mountains in the area (and he was), why didn't aircraft discover him?

The position in which the searchers found the body is also suspect. I have read numerous descriptions of the manner in which bodies are found and how they fall straight on their faces. It almost sounds as though the body is placed in that position.

The coroner stated that Eddie died of exposure, but it didn't give the time or date of death. There were never any articles that stated searchers found any of Eddie's personal articles. Early in the search for Eddie, a search authority stated that it was possible that Eddie had met with foul play. Articles never addressed this theory after the body was found. I would refer readers to other stories I have documented about hunters missing under highly unusual circumstances. I would classify the disappearance of Eddie Grant as extremely unusual.

Roy Agee

Missing: 10/01/51, 4:00 p.m., Elk City, ID

Age at disappearance: 63 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Weather

♦Various articles used the name Roy and others used Ray Agee. I'll use Roy as the majority of articles used this name.

This story deals with someone of high intellect, thus proving that all types of people can disappear and permanently vanish. Based on the numbers I've established the area of this disappearance has to be littered with several bodies of missing hunters and hikers over the last two hundred years.

Roy Agee was a prominent attorney from Twin Falls, Idaho. He had traveled to an area seven miles east of Elk City, a lonely area without

any major resources. He was there for elk hunting. On October 1, 1951, at approximately 4:00 p.m., he was hunting with his partner. An October 3,1951, article in the Ogden Standard explained what happened: “He left Agee on a mountain point while he attempted to drive some elk toward him. When the companion returned an hour later, Agee was gone.” The partner went back to camp thinking Agee was there. He never arrived back, and a search was started. The initial search was done by other hunters in the camp. Once that search failed to find the attorney, they left to get law enforcement.

The incident happened in the Clearwater National Forest. Twin Falls County Sheri Jesse Carlton brought as many searchers as he could gather to look for Roy. Most of the people were recruited from the Grangeville area. Three parties of fifteen men searched for several days during di icult weather conditions. Several articles stated that bloodhounds were called o on October 9 because “rains had obliterated any scent left by Roy Agee.” The search was called o on October 12 because of weather and tired searchers. Roy’s brother gathered another group together and went back into the field for another few days. On October 18, this search was terminated because often to fourteen inches of snow on the ground.

On October 10, Roy’s relatives posted a reward of one thousand dollars. The reward was meant to get people into the field looking for the attorney. The reward specified that it was for the man, dead or alive. From everything that I could determine, Roy was never found.

This area is one of the more remote regions in Idaho. Several hunters have gone missing from this general area, which is associated with elk hunting. It’s always di icult to get searchers and other resources to an area that is extremely isolated. The farther you get back into the wilderness, the better the hunting and the harder the searching.

**Note the following case happened on the exact same day as Mr. Agee’s disappearance.

Bryan Warner

Missing: 10/01/51, Orogrande, ID

Age at disappearance: Unk

Weather* Canines* Hunter

Bryan Warner was a longtime resident and miner that lived in Orogrande, Idaho. He had a claim that he worked on Fog Mountain,

two miles north of the Selway River and northeast of Orogrande.

In early October 1951, there was an unexpected snow storm that hit mid-Idaho and trapped many hunters in the high wilderness. The local sheri s were scrambling to save almost a dozen hunters that had been reported missing, one of those was Bryan Warner. The October 9, 1951 edition of the Great Falls Tribune had these details about Bryan's disappearance, "Bryan Warner an Orogrande, Idaho miner disappeared in the Fog Mountain area." The area where Bryan vanished is very thick with trees, has steep mountains and is a hunting location that is not easy.

Bryan had gone elk hunting in an area he knew like his backyard, Fog Mountain. Nobody truly believed he was lost; some thought he might have had an injury and couldn't move. The local sheri initially dispatched two airplanes that flew for two days, finding nothing. The October 10, 1951, Ogden Standard Newspaper had these details, "Bloodhounds were called o because rains had obliterated any scent left by Ray Agee, Twin Falls attorney and Bryan Warner, Orogrande miner when they disappeared last Monday. The storm quickly turned to snow, and 10-14 inches fell in the following days essentially eliminating the e ort to locate Bryan. Roy Agee was found in the following days, alive.

One of the people who was a constant figure in the search for Bryan was his brother, Jack. He searched every day for two weeks showing a tireless e ort from a family member.

In spite of the e orts of ground searchers, canines, airplanes and family member, Bryan Warner was never found.

James Madison

Missing: 9/11/52, 6:00 p.m., Nez Perce National Forest, ID

Age at disappearance: 67 years

Cluster Zone» Canines» Missing Shoes

I've written about a few hunters who disappeared amid extremely strange circumstances. James Madison was a lifetime hunter and outdoorsman and was one of the few individuals who nobody would have thought could get lost.

James was camping with his good friend Claude Bu alo in a remote location fourteen miles east of the Red River Ranger Station in the Nez

Perce National Forest. The men wanted to get an early jump on hunting season. The season would start on September 15.

At approximately 6:00 p.m. on September 11, Jim and Claude established their camp. They planned to hike the following three days and find the perfect spot to drop their game. James knew they needed water, and he headed for the creek with a bucket and his rifle. After almost thirty minutes, Claude became concerned for his friend and started looking for him. He called Jim's name throughout the night and heard nothing. The following morning Claude drove to the ranger station and reported Jim missing. The rangers brought local sheri 's deputies, and they brought bloodhounds. The searchers found nothing and were getting frustrated. A September 16 headline in the Lewiston Morning Tribune summarized the situation: "Hounds Stymied in Woods Hunt." The dogs weren't finding a scent trail, and they weren't finding tracks. The search continued.

On September 23 four airmen from the local military transport school took to the air looking for James. The air force was in the sky for two days and saw nothing of value.

On September 24, late in the afternoon, four hikers found something in a remote section of the Salmon River, miles from where everyone thought James would be: a body, facedown, twenty feet from shore in eighteen inches of water. A September 26 article in the Lewiston Morning Tribune had the following description of the body: "Robertson said death apparently was caused by exhaustion rather than drowning. Madison was clad in underwear and a T-shirt. He was barefooted and the soles of his feet were worn to the bone." The article further states that he was found fifteen miles from his camp, and it was believed that he walked ten days before reaching the site at the river. The coroner stated that James had been in the water for three to four days.

In total, almost one hundred fifty people searched for James. Bloodhounds picked up one scent and tracked it for miles to another hunter. James's track was never found by the dogs. He was found in an area nobody had believed he would be.

Summary

In the thousands of cases I've reviewed, I've never read about another man removing his boots and then wearing his feet to the bone. I won't state the obvious here. The weather was moderate at the time of the disappearance, and nobody could explain where James's clothes went.

There is another case where a boy disappeared when his father and he were in the forest cutting wood. The boy was with his brother, went to get the water, and started to walk back but spilled the load. His brother continued back to his dad, and the boy went back for more water. After he got the water, he stated (after he was found) that he didn't recognize where he was and got lost. Could this be a possible explanation for what happened to James Madison? There doesn't seem to be any logical explanation for many of the things that James experienced.

Lemar Pepmuller

Missing: 11/21/53, eighteen miles southwest of Wallace, ID

Age at disappearance: 22 years

Weather* Cluster Zone

Lemar and his wife moved to Kellogg, Idaho, from Spencer, North Dakota, in November 1952. The hunter enjoyed the outdoors and specifically enjoyed deer hunting. He lived just eight miles from Wallace, and it was just eighteen miles south of Wallace that he found a location to hunt. On November 21, 1953, Pepmuller left his wife to spend the day hunting in the Slate Creek area south of Wallace.

Lemar didn't return on November 21, and his wife called law enforcement on November 22. Just as the search began, the snow started to fall hard and continued for several days until twenty inches of snow were on the ground. Sheri 's deputies and forest-service personnel all contributed in the e ort to locate the lost hunter. Searchers had no luck in searching for the vehicle during the first few days; then, on Wednesday, Lady Luck arrived, and they found it. Sixty search-and-rescue personnel now converged on the area around the vehicle to look for Lemar.

On the same day searchers found the car, they found Lemar's body protruding from the snow one mile from his vehicle. The hunter had the backboard to carry a deer on his back but no deer. Beside his car, they found one half of a deer carcass, but when they backtracked to where the body was located and the scene of the kill, they couldn't find the other half of the carcass or Lemar's rifle.

A November 26, 1958, article in the Twin Falls Time News had the following information about Lemar's body: "Coroner H. O. Mowery said Pepmuller apparently became exhausted while hunt-ing, collapsed and died." Think about this statement clearly: Lemar wasn't

hunting; he was transporting the carcass to the vehicle when something happened. Another article stated that the coroner met the body at the funeral home and pronounced onsite he died of a heart attack. There was no autopsy.

Summary

Lemar Pepmuller's death has too many unanswered questions to be closed in a three-paragraph article. What happened to the hunter hasn't been fully explained. There are very few twenty-two-year-old men that die from heart attacks; it's quite rare. What happened in the field that made Lemar so shaken that he died? What happened to the other half of the dead deer? Where was the rifle? Hunters routinely carry a gun while moving the carcass because on your return trip you could walk into a major predator trying to steal your kill. We can only imagine what Lemar saw or ran into on that return trip that gave him a heart attack and took his firearm. There were no notations in any articles indicating Lemar had been in a struggle, but something took his rifle and deer—what?

Charles Miller Jr.

Missing: 10/10/54, Soda Springs, ID

Age at disappearance: 25 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Illness/ Disability

Charles Miller Jr. was a married man living in Roy, Utah. In early October 1954, he made the 175-mile trip north into Arimo, Idaho, where he picked up his brother-in-law, Buddy Campbell. Buddy and Charles made the short drive to Soda Springs and then into the mountains eight miles northeast to the Tin cup area of the Caribou Mountains. This area is just seven miles from the Wyoming border and thirty miles south of Teton National Park. Both men were experienced hunters and were looking for elk.

Charles and Buddy started their hunt on October 10. They left camp and agreed to hunt alone and set a time to meet back at their camp. Buddy made it back on time, Charles did not. Buddy searched for a short time and then drove into Soda Springs to get the sheri .

Almost from the time Charles went missing, snow started to fall, and it got heavier and thicker as time went by. The sheri originally put in equestrians and hikers, and when the weather permitted, the civil air patrol was in the sky. Charles's wife told law enforcement that her

husband was a diabetic and was not carrying his insulin. Because of Charles's medical needs, there was urgency to the search e orts. The sheri called Hill Air Force Base and requested a helicopter. The base agreed but couldn't make it airborne because of the horrendous weather. Later in the search, the sheri learned that Charles was a nonsmoker and was not carrying matches. It seemed as though Charles was not getting any lucky breaks.

Caribou County sheri Ralph Marriott stated that he had searched twenty square miles and had found no trace of Charles. On October 14, the sheri reported that twelve inches of snow had dropped since the time he vanished.

The search e ort had many stops and restarts because of weather and manpower. Finally, on October 22, the search was formally terminated.

The horrific weather inhibited helicopters from covering the sky, and this is important. A helicopter can hover and slowly do flyovers in areas where there would be a high probability of him being there. Planes have to continue flying; helicopters can hover.

It's hard to understand how a man at the height of his physical abilities can disappear and not be found. There were never any rifle shots heard from anyone in the area, meaning Charles hadn't fired any rounds in distress.

The reason these stories are here: they are true mysteries.

Ronald Hu ord

Missing: 10/01/56, Bu alo Humps Wilderness, ID

Age at disappearance: 28 years

Cluster Zone* Canines* Weather

The area where this incident occurred has an established cluster of missing people identified in my past books. It is one of fifty-eight geographical clusters of missing people in North America. The disappearances run the field from hikers to hunters and everything in between.

Ronald Hu ord had a very busy September in 1956. On September 20 he was married. Days after he was wed, he and his wife moved from Lewiston to Clarkston, which is essentially a move from one side of

the Snake River to the other.

He told his wife that he was driving to the area of Elk City, Idaho, and making his way to the Bu alo Humps area to go elk hunting. He stated that he'd be gone for one night and then return home. Ronald was supposed to be home the morning of October 1. When he didn't arrive, his wife, Virginia, called his father and authorities and notified them where she thought her husband had traveled.

Albert Hu ord was Ron's dad and arrived in the Humps soon after he was notified. He assisted searchers in formulating a plan and understanding his sons abilities and mind-set. Within just a few days, searchers had brought in a helicopter from Fairchild Air Force Base. They also had an agreement from the US Forest Service that eleven smoke jumpers would come to the scene. It took just two days for searchers to find Ron's sedan. It was described as stopped on a dirt road in the Humps, mired in mud. His rifle was gone, and there was no sign of Ron. Once searchers found the car, bloodhounds were brought to the vehicle in an e ort to pick up his scent. The dogs could not track Ron and were soon pulled from the scene. There were other issues with the search. Heavy rain, wind, and cold temperatures also nagged at searchers and made conditions di icult. There was an interesting article in the October 8 edition of the Idaho State Journal: "Idaho County Sheri Bud Taylor said searchers had failed to find any sign of Hu ord on the wild Idaho County Country. Last week the sheri said he was not too concerned about the lost man since two streams in the area would lead a hunter to civilization." Days after the sheri made that statement you wonder if his attitude had changed.

Bu alo Hump is the highest section in the Gospel Hump Wilderness inside the Nez Perce National Forest. You cannot drive a vehicle inside a wilderness zone nor can you land a plane. It is a difficult and wild area in which to look for a lost person. Three weeks after Ronald disappeared, searchers were exhausted and had run out of resources.

As in the vast majority of cases where a missing person isn't found, the case quickly got o the front page of the news and evaporated from the minds of the public. It did not leave the mind of Ron's newlywed bride, Virginia. She lived with this pain for a lifetime.

Readers may not know that it is very di icult to get a judge to issue a death certificate for someone who isn't found. On September 20, 1959, Ron still had not been found nor heard from by anyone, and this forced the hand of Virginia. A judge wasn't going to issue a death certificate. So she filed for legal divorce in Asotin County Superior

Court. Paperwork stated that Ron was last seen on September 30, 1956, and hadn't been seen since.

Let's remember the statement of the sheri : there were two streams in the area where Ron disappeared, and they both led to civilization. How could anyone get lost? He wasn't found by Bloodhounds. They could not find a scent to follow, and he wasn't seen from the air. The million-dollar question is, what happened to Ronald Hu ord?

Ted Nalman

Missing: 9/07/59, Moore Lake, Eastern ID

Age at disappearance: 14 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Weather* Missing Clothing/ Shoes

The Nalman family lived in Kellogg, Idaho. On September 6, 1959, Fred Nalman took his fourteen-year-old son, Ted, to eastern Idaho to hunt bear.

The hunters were en route to the area of Moore Lake, which sits just one hundred yards inside of Montana at the Idaho border. This is a very rugged area that has no less than four roads that surround the area of Moore Lake. The elevation of the ridgelines in this area is six thousand feet.

Fred and Ted arrived into the border area and spent the night. Early the following morning, the two hunters split up and attempted to stay reasonably close to each other. At the end of the hunting day, Fred returned to their campsite, and Ted never arrived. Fred didn't wait long before enlisting the assistance of the local sheri and forest-service employees to look for his son.

The search for Ted was large for eastern Idaho. The sheri was able to obtain a helicopter that covered ridges, mountains, and meadows in its e ort to find the young hunter. However, searchers were compromised in their e orts as rain and snow fell almost the entire time they were in the field. Two days into the search, rescue workers were able to locate a fisherman who had seen Ted late in the day that he disappeared. A September 11 article in the Eugene-Register-Guard had the following information about Ted: "Young Nalman was last seen by a fisherman, Don Pierce of Kellogg on Monday afternoon. He said that Nalman asked him the direction to a roadway. Gardner said the youth had traveled the roughest stretch to the roadway and had only a quarter mile to do over a less rugged section when he faltered

and died. The spot where the body was found was some three-quarters of a mile from where father and son camped."

Searchers continued to look for Ted and found him face down on a ridgeline Thursday afternoon, four days after he vanished. The same Eugene-Register article had the following about finding Ted: "The body of Ted Nalman, son of a Kellogg miner, was found face down on a timbered ridge in the Moore Lake area, about fifteen miles south of St. Regis, Montana. The boy's shoes were missing and so was the rifle he was carrying on a bear trip with his father over Labor Day."

Ted was given an autopsy where the coroner determined the boy died of exposure.

Summary

Ted was found a short distance from where the fisherman had spoken with him. Sometime in that short time and distance something deadly happened to the young man. He was speaking, alive, and in good condition, heading toward the roadway, when he left the fisherman. How could things go so drastically wrong in such a short distance? People who have read my past books remember stories where hunters disappear and soon their clothing is gone and their firearms disappear. How or why Ted's boots came o is one monumental question in this case. Hunters and fisherman must have footwear in the mountains, or they are quickly restricted in their movements and will su er from exposure to the cold elements. As I have stated many, many times, hunters know that their lifeline is their rifle. They can summon help by firing it. Nobody heard one round come from Ted's gun, but where was his rifle? The fact that Ted's body was found face down on a ridgeline also does not make any sense, as this position indicates the boy was unconscious when his face went into the ground, or he was placed that way. I would've liked to be the first rescuer on the scene to see if he had facial damage from hitting the ground.

There were discrepancies in the articles I reviewed for this story as well. Some stories listed Fred's son's name as "Fred" and others as "Ted." I chose to use "Ted" as it made the story easier to follow.

Fred Vinneau

Missing: 10/06/60, Kooskia, Idaho

Age at disappearance: 84 years

Disability» Point of Separation» Canines» Weather» Hunter

As I have researched missing hunters, I am constantly asking myself how much these outdoorsman train before they go into the woods? Do these people exercise before they go out and start climbing mountains, forging rivers and carrying packs at high elevations? It would be a good practice always to train before you set out alone into the wilderness, it can be a treacherous place.

Fred Vinneau was described in the October 11, 1960 edition of the Statesman Journal as “quite spry for his age,” but the same article also stated he had a heart condition. Fred had traveled with his son, Cyril from Spokane to the area of the Powell Ranger Station on the Lochsa River in Idaho for Elk Hunting. They established a camp and were intending to work the area of Mochsa Creek for big game.

On Thursday, October 6, 1960, Fred and his son decided to hunt di erent areas and agreed to meet that afternoon back at camp (Point of Separation), Fred never came back. Another hunter in the area and Cyril spent Friday and Saturday scouring the mountains, shooting their rifles and honking their vehicle horn attempting to attract Fred, it didn’t work. On Monday, Cyril worked his way out of the woods and notified Idaho County Sheri Bud Taylor of the incident, and a search started.

The October 12 edition of the Twin-News stated, “Hope of finding an elderly Spokane hunter faded today as temperatures dropped and snow covered the primitive area of north-central Idaho where he has been for six days. The article also stated that the weather grounded helicopters and kept Bloodhounds from tracking in the search area.

The exact area of the search was fifteen miles west of the Powell Ranger Station on the Lochsa River and approximately twenty miles south of Lola Hot Springs.

The search was terminated on October 13. There were subsequent searches once the snow cleared and cadaver dogs could work. Fred Vinneau was never found.

Fred Dorsey

Missing: 10/21/61, Monument Peak, ID

Age at disappearance: 19 years

Weather» Cluster Zone» Point of Separation

♦Various articles identified this person as Fred or Floyd. The majority

of the stories used Fred and I will use that here.

Many of the stories I document involve weather as a primary factor in the disappearance. In this incident over one hundred hunters were trapped or endangered during an October storm that crippled southern Idaho. I don't believe that these sportsmen didn't check the weather before they went out, not one hundred of them. This implies that it was an unexpected event that actually killed several hunters. This is really a story of bad timing, bad judgment, and bad weather.

On October 20, 1961, Fred Dorsey left his residence in Paul, Idaho, to travel across the Snake River, drive through Burley, and take the relatively short journey to Monument Peak near the Utah border.

Fred arrived at the Monument Peak area with friends and left early on October 21 for the first day of deer hunting. Fred's hunting partner was Harold Cavener, also of Paul. Fred put down a deer just as the weather was starting to get bad. He told his partner that he was going to stay with his kill and that he'd get back to camp soon. The weather was so bad that Harold went back to camp. Fred never arrived, and his friends went out to search for him.

Fred's friends couldn't find him as the blizzard settled in to wreak havoc on Monument Peak. Unbeknownst to his friends, Fred had given up on carrying his deer out and was found staggering down a dirt road nearly frozen. A June 11, 1962, article in the Ogden Standard Examiner had a description of the event: "Dorsey had been brought in by other hunters in a pickup truck. He was cold and unable to make his way back to his camp. He had to be helped from the pickup. He was given food and hot co ee, then insisted on leaving to find his way back to his camp. He was never seen again." Remember, Fred's friends never knew at the time that he'd been found and then never knew he had left again. They were already headed to get assistance from law enforcement. An October 25, 1961, article in the Idaho State Journal described the weather in the area: "Hundreds were stranded by the heavy snowfall Saturday, the opening day of the hunt. Most of them reached safety. Searchers figure the rest, perhaps 100 are all right. They are concentrating their search on 5,000 foot Monument Peak area where Fred Dorsey 19, of nearby Paul, was last seen with his kill when the storm started."

Monument Peak is an interesting area. There are wide swaths of open meadows coupled with areas with heavy timber. The landscape changes often. After several days, the searchers were able to bring in two planes of the civil air patrol from Boise and another volunteer

pilot. The group searched o and on for over ten days. Searchers did not find anything. The o icial search was terminated on November 1. Searchers cited four-foot snowdrifts that hampered their e ort to find evidence of where the young hunter may have gone.

There were articles in local papers as late as June 20, 1962, that stated that early summer searches were conducted to find Fred's body and indicated that they had no luck and he was not found.

Weather has been a consistent issue in many of the missing who fit the identified profile. In this case, the hunters were seemingly not anticipating this weather event. When numbers approaching one hundred are at risk and stranded, it's apparent the sportsmen did not expect the severity of the blizzard. It is especially bothersome to me that Fred's body was never found. The area doesn't have the hiding places that some boulder-strewn areas possess. This is the only event that I can remember where a hunter was saved from certain death, given new life, and then walked out into oblivion and disappeared again.

The only other story I can remember that comes close involves a young, brilliant physics graduate student that was hiking with her boyfriend. Somehow, they were separated, and she got lost. She called on her cell phone for assistance and luckily got through to the New Mexico emergency services group. Despite a series of unbelievable connection failures, she was eventually located and rescued. A storm had moved into the area, and a New Mexico State Police helicopter risked the weather to fly into the wilderness to save the people. Unfortunately, after picking up the student, the copter crashed and killed her. As I stated in the story, it seemed as though it was destined that she never leave that mountain alive. Once you read the entire story, you'll see why. The event is in Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail.

As best I can determine, Fred Dorsey was never found.

Virgil Mulck

Missing: 10/24/62, Lochsa-Selway Wilderness, ID

Age at disappearance: 55 years

Canines* Disability* Point of Separation* Hunter

It's rare when I find a story about a missing first responder; this is the second case of this profession being lost in this specific area of Idaho.

Virgil Mulck was a 55- year old firefighter from Sacramento, California that came to the wilderness area east of Grangeville, Idaho to hunt elk. He came with a good friend, and they established a camp in the Lochsa-Selway Rivers Wilderness. The named location given in several articles doesn't appear to exist today, the closest I could find is the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. One article did give as the location as 20 miles east of Kooskia, Idaho.

On October 24, 1962, Mulck and his friend left for elk hunting and were hiking a trail a mile and a half from camp. Mulck told his partner that his legs were hurting and stated he was heading back to camp, point of separation. Mulck's partner returned to camp later that day and couldn't locate his friend. He searched the area and then notified the Idaho County Sheri .

Sheri Bud Taylor brought in significant area resources to look for Virgil. The October 28, 1962 edition of the Arizona Republic had these details, "Despite good tracking conditions yesterday searchers using Bloodhounds failed to find a trace of a California hunter missing since Wednesday in the north-central Idaho wilderness." Virgil's family traveled to the Idaho location and assisted in the search and o ered a $200 reward to keep searchers in the field.

The SAR e ort lasted eight days until Sheri Taylor stated that they had run out of locations to search and terminated the e ort. This is another in a long line of missing people from this region of Idaho.

Martin Woodward

Missing: 11/17/63, 2:00 p.m., Keeler Creek, Clarkia, ID

Age at disappearance: 22 years

Point of Separation* Weather

The exact location of this case was fifteen miles south of Clarkia in the Keeler Creek area. This would be approximately forty-five miles east of the Washington border and northeast of Moscow. The region is covered with very thick and lush big timber. If you look at a map now, it does not look as it did in 1963. Much of the area has been heavily logged.

In November 1963, twenty-two-year-old Martin Woodward was employed by the Bunker Hill Company of Kellogg, Idaho, and lived in Wardner. On November 17, 1963, Martin was elk hunting with his stepfather, Stewart Olmstead, in the Keeler Creek area. The two

decided to hunt alone and agreed on a time and place to meet later in the day. Martin never arrived, and Stewart left the area to get assistance from forestry o icials in Clarkia and the local sheri . In a short period of time, o icials got up to one hundred SAR personnel on the scene.

The search started on November 18 simultaneously as snow started to fall. The weather got continually worse over the following four days. The clouds parted for a short time on November 21, and a military helicopter from Larson Air Force Base joined the search. The helicopter crew flew the region during most of the day, primarily looking for tracks, movement, and odd colors. They saw nothing of value. The search for Martin was o icially terminated on November 22.

Martin's family felt destined to find the young man. On May 25, 1964, the family and friends went back to the region and searched for days. They again found nothing.

There was no information about Martin for almost two years. The September 27, 1965, Nampa Free Press reported a stunning discovery: "The search for Martin Woodward, 21 of Smelterville, which began two years ago, ended during the weekend with the finding of a scattered skeleton along a remote high ridge in Clearwater County." The article had conflicting information on Martin's age and his hometown. The facts concerning who found the skeleton were never disclosed. I find it fascinating that his skeleton was found on a ridge when the pair were hunting a creek, a ridge that a helicopter crew surely would've passed over and could've seen a man. It would not make sense for Martin to stay on a ridge long because of the snow. Wind and heavy snow gets worse at altitude. Protection is in the valley away from open areas.

There have been several stories of missing people where they were not found on multiple searches and then suddenly turn up in a nearby area. The exact location of Martin's remains were never made public, I have no idea why.

Lowell Smith

Missing: 10/5/68, Pilot Knob, Grangeville, Idaho

Age at disappearance: 60 years

Cluster Zone*

It's a rare occasion when a former professional athlete makes the news for being lost in the wild, but that is exactly what happened on October 5, 1968. Lowell Smith was a former Green Bay Packers football player. Smith had an excellent job in Fernley, Nevada, where he was the superintendent of the United Serra Mining and Milling Company.

In early October 1968, the hunter traveled to an area called Pilot Knob, nineteen miles east of Grangeville, Idaho. Pilot Knob is known as a great hunting area in the fall and is in the northern section of the Nez Perce National Forest.

Idaho County sheri Gene Fuzzell conducted an extensive five- day search for Lowell. Two helicopters were utilized in the search along with a massive ground team. On October 9, ground teams happened onto Lowell's camp in the Lightning Creek drainage. This area is thick with old-growth trees and significant ground cover. The team found the brand of cigarettes that Lowell smoked, along with ammunition, food, and evidence that Lowell had been there for at least two days. Another item they found at the camp caused serious concern—Lowell's rifle. A hunter would never leave his or her rifle in camp and wander from the immediate area—never.

Lowell was a very influential figure in Nevada. His family had two senators call the Idaho governor and ask for the search for Lowell to continue. The Idaho governor got their National Guard to assist in the search for two additional weeks. Teams spent a total of three weeks searching the area where Lowell's camp was found. They never located Lowell or discovered any other evidence.

Summary

It's hard to imagine that hundreds of National Guard members, spending weeks searching an identified area around a campsite, cannot find a missing hunter. It would appear that Lowell was nowhere in the area close to the campsite. He was a very experienced hunter and would never leave the camp area without his rifle. If Lowell knew never to leave without his rifle, and his body wasn't found anywhere near the camp, what forced him to leave?

James Schroeder

Missing: 09/25/82, 3:00 p.m., forty-five miles northeast of Grangeville
Age at disappearance: 23 years

Weather* Point of Separation

I can remember a trip I took when I was twenty-three years old. I was a policeman; I took a week o and went to pick up three friends in Davis, California. The guys were in veterinary school, and we headed for the Scott River in Northern California to fish and enjoy the outdoors. I was with three young men that were brilliant, had high levels of common sense, loved the outdoors, and were essentially in their element. I knew that during my trip, if anything had happened to me, these guys would've had my back and saved my life. This is a question that anyone headed for the outdoors needs to ask oneself about the people you are with. Will this person do all he or she can to save me?

James Schroeder, David Benesh, and Dan Cummings were from Wisconsin and loved the outdoors. The guys drove from their homes in Wisconsin to Idaho for elk hunting. The guys were headed for a wilderness camp forty-five miles northeast of Grangeville in an extremely remote location. They contracted to take two mules and one burro that would carry their packs, tents, and supplies.

I will warn you now that many of the articles about this event had conflicting facts. I contacted the Idaho County Sheri 's O ice and was able to obtain all reports associated with the incident. What I am presenting is the o icial facts surrounding the event.

On September 22 the men drove their vehicles into a location o Highway 12 and stopped at the Split Creek trailhead. They packed ten miles into Louse Lake and set their camp overlooking a beautiful spot. The men had gone for elk hunting, but there was one major issue. According to the sheri 's report, the area they were camping was closed for hunting until October 6. In addition to the hunting issue, the men either forgot or didn't think they would need a stove. They were going to cook o an open fire.

There was no mention of what the three young men did on September 23.

On September 24 they did go hunting by themselves. Benesh and Cummings reported to the sheri that James did not return to their camp until 9:00 p.m., and it was after dark. The weather at this point was still good. It was not clear whether James had been lost or was just hunting late.

The morning of September 25 came with the men up early and eating breakfast. James was last seen by his companions leaving camp at quarter after six in the morning, armed with his 7-mm rifle and

thirteen rounds of ammunition. The two hunting partners reported that they told James to take a hat, matches, food, and other supplies. He refused. He was wearing a green plaid shirt and brown pants. The weather was reported as good at this point.

At 5:40 p.m., Benesh and Cummings told deputies that they heard two gunshots in the Gedney Creek drainage. They believed it must've come from James, but they weren't sure. As the night got dark, bad weather was quickly moving in. At approximately 10:00 p.m., it started to rain at their camp. James didn't make it back. There were no notes of Benesh or Cummings going out to look for James, firing o rounds from camp, or even yelling for their friend. At the minimum, they should've built a large bonfire on a nearby ridge to give him a spot to walk toward.

On Sunday, September 26, Cummings reported that he went out of camp to see if he could find any indications of where his friend was located. Benesh stayed in camp as Cummings searched. It was never noted how long Benesh looked for James, but he reported he found nothing. Again, there were no notes of firing rounds, building a bonfire, and so forth.

On Monday, September 27, James was still missing. The notes in the report describe the weather at their camp: "The weather was extremely bad; rain and sleet. Both Cummings and Benesh stayed in camp." After over sixty hours since his hunting partners had last seen James, nobody was looking for the young hunter.

The weather on the morning of September 28 wasn't much better than the previous two days. The small amount of firewood they had gathered prior to the rain was now soaked, and they couldn't light it. The guys made a decision to leave and obtain assistance. Benesh and Cummings couldn't get the burro to follow them out, so they left it. They stated that there was four inches of snow on the ground, and it was still snowing when they departed their camp. Late that afternoon they reported James as a missing person to the Idaho County sheri in Three Rivers.

Benesh and Cummings stopped at the Three Rivers Motel and Resort. At 3:00 p.m. Deputy Loftin from the Idaho County Sheri 's O ice arrived to document the circumstances of the event. The men added that the day James vanished he left at quarter after six in the morning with the intent of hunting Chimney Peak and the area of Old Man Lake. They stated they heard two shots from the area of Gedney Mountain late that afternoon or early evening.

They told the deputy that they were going to drive to Moscow and stay with a brother of James's, Gary Schroeder. This was a 110- mile or more drive through mountain country. The deputy spoke to Gary and asked him if he had heard from James. He stated that he had not. Lastly the men told the deputy that they were going to head back to their mountain camp tomorrow to get the burro and other items they'd left behind.

The formal search for James started on September 29 when an Idaho County deputy along with two others took three saddle horses and three pack horses and left from the Boyd Creek trail on the Selway River to get to the Louse Lake site. Simultaneously, two members from the US Forest Service backpacked in from Gedney Creek. As the two teams were humping their way through rugged country and freezing weather, they were advised by radio that Benesh and Cummings wouldn't be returning to camp that day as they had stated. The teams were told they'd return the following day.

When the deputies arrived at the camp, they found chaos. The area was under a foot of snow. All the gear that had been left behind was soaked, and their tent pole had busted and was down under the snow. The rescuers did fire o two shots and didn't hear anything returned.

Thursday morning, September 30, arrived, and the weather cleared a bit. The deputies called for a search helicopter and got it. It flew the Gedney Creek drainage for what appears to have been several hours. It found nothing. The deputies searched the area around Old Man Lake and the surrounding vicinity and found nothing. At half past five that afternoon, Benesh and Cummings arrived at camp with their two pack mules. The two hunters were questioned by deputies that night and then advised they 'were calling o the search because of extremely cold temperatures.

On October 1, the deputies went out the way they'd come and were followed by Benesh and Cummings. Any hope of finding James alive had just left the mountain. The sheri 's deputy who chronicled the event in the o icial report made a section called "additional notes." His notes are below.

Cummings and Benesh never fired any signal shots to help the victim. Only Cummings had a rifle and he said he never thought of it. Benesh said it was because Cummings loaded his own shells and didn't feel he had any to spare.

When Cummings and Benesh left camp, they left no dry wood or

matches in case the victim returned. If the victim had made it back to camp after they'd left, we feel he would have died there.

When asked why one didn't stay while one went out for help, they said they were afraid one man by himself would get lost on the trail.

They gave no reason why they waited until Thursday to return from Moscow. We could see no reason for them to spend two full nights in Moscow.

We feel that dressed the way he was, without matches or food and taking the weather into consideration, the victim could not have lasted long. We feel he was dead before we ever started the search. We also feel that his chances for survival were lessened because his hunting companions failed to do one thing right to help him. If they would've fired signal shots the victim quite possibly could have heard them. Also, if one of them would have gone for help right away, the search party might have been searching while the victim as still alive.

Neither the victim or his companions were equipped enough or knowledgeable enough to be that far from a road. Cummings and Benesh were advised of our feelings on the subject. They packed in no feed for their pack animals as well as no stove or lantern. Their camp gear was scattered over a 30 foot area and under a foot of snow.

I hope that every hunter in the world reads that last piece written by the deputy. There are many who could learn from these mistakes, and this advice could save lives.

The last item in the report was a letter from Marie Schroeder, James's sister. She asked the sheri 's department to give her the exact location that the search had centered on. She stated that she was still going to try to find her brother.

James was never found.

Susan Seymour Adams Missing: 09/30/90, Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, ID

Age at disappearance: 42 years

Cluster Zone* Weather

Susan Seymour Adams was raised in Austin, Texas. Her mother was an employee at Nambe Mills, a retailer with many stores. Once Susan disappeared, Nambe Mills held benefits to raise money for her search. The e ort got national attention; you may have seen the associated publicity.

Susan and her husband, Tom, had

taken a guided horseback trip into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness for hunting. The hunters' camp was established twenty air miles west of Hamilton near Battle Lake. On September 30, 1990, Susan took her bird-watching book and camera and took a short hike out of camp, saying she'd be back soon. Susan didn't come back. Hunters, hikers, and volunteers searched for eight days and found nothing. At the end of the eighth day, rain and snow hit the area, and search e orts were terminated. Snow continued for many days and covered any evidence that would've led to her discovery. There was a secondary search that started in early October. This e ort had to stop after two days because of heavy rain. There was a third search in July 1991, and again nothing was found.

Approximately one year after Susan had vanished, this article appeared in the September 22, 1991, Santa Fe New Mexican:

On September 30, 1990, Susan Seymour Adams walked out of a hunting camp in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness area and disappeared. Intensive searches were conducted following her disappearance, but were hampered by the remoteness of the area, the rugged terrain and snow. Additional e orts in July 1991 after the snow melted were also unsuccessful. Based upon the local sheri 's o ice investigations and the professionals, an Idaho district judge on July 19, 1991, declared Susan dead of injuries and/or exposure as of September 30, 1990.

You will not read about Susan on any database, and she's not listed as a missing person. She has o icially been declared dead without her body ever being found.

Susan is also another in a long line of people who have disappeared with a camera in their hand. There are several people who have taken a short hike and seemed to evaporate away. Remember, she wasn't going to hike far; she hadn't taken extra supplies, and nobody found a

trace.

Brian Sines

Missing: 11/22/91, southeast of Clarkia, ID

Age at disappearance: 29 years

Canines* Cluster Zone

Brian Sines was an employee of the Potlach Lumber Mill in Saint Maries, Idaho. He had a day o of work and decided to go to the mountains south of Clarkia on a hunting trip. Brian failed to arrive at work Monday morning, so friends and relatives went to the area he was hunting, where they found his truck. A February 27, 1992, article in the Spokane Chronicle reported the following: “They found Sines’ pickup parked in the middle of a forest-service road as if he had stopped suddenly and jumped out to chase a deer. Searchers followed his tracks up a ridge but lost them on the other side.”

The writer of the article obviously made an assumption that Brian was chasing a deer. I say that he saw something that attracted his attention to the point that he stopped in the middle of the road and left his truck. Once his friends found the truck, they brought in search dogs to pick up a scent. The dogs followed a trail up a ridgeline and then stopped. Searchers scoured the area but could not locate Brian.

Nothing happened in the Brian Sines case until a water-measuring team went into the wilderness to measure the snowpack on February 25, 1992. The team found a bone and pieces of bone near the bottom of a ridgeline and notified law enforcement.

Shoshone County Sheri ’s O ice responded to the location and found keys, credit cards, and clothing that was later identified as belonging to Brian Sines. Searchers found an intact clavicle, one arm bone, and one leg bone, but many pieces of bone were scattered across and down the ridge. There were some thoughts that Brian may have fallen, but no bones were found broken. Bones were found in pieces, but that was attributed to animals.

The coroner made a determination that Brian died of exposure—a very bold statement. Brian was only five miles from his truck, which seems odd. If he did bolt from the truck to chase something, it would seem odd that he’d travel five miles knowing his truck was blocking a forest-service road. I would understand his making a short chase and maybe firing a few rounds if he saw something. The idea that he

stayed with whatever he was chasing for five miles (equaling at least an hour-long chase) seems very unusual. It's possible Brian died somewhere else and was carried to the ridge, but we will never know.

Brian Sines disappeared on November 22, 1991 in Idaho, Corey Fay vanished the following day hunting in Oregon, coincidence?

Richard Willis Bendele

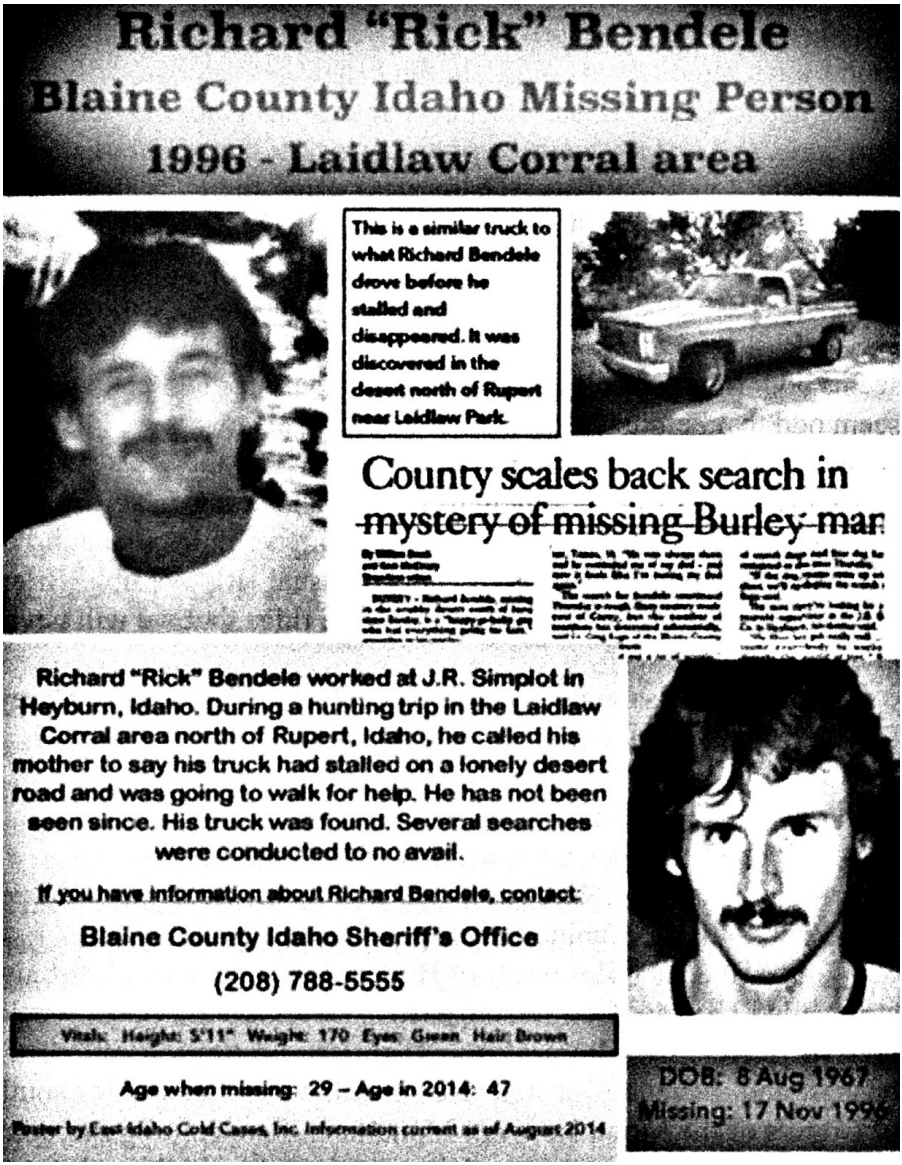
Missing: 11/17/96, 6:00 p.m., Laidlaw Corral, ID

Age at disappearance: 29 years

Equipment Failure* Canines* Weather

Thirty-five air miles north of Burley, Idaho, is a small dirt airstrip called Laidlaw Corral. It is a desolate region that most would believe is not fit for humankind. There are no trees, a few scrub bushes, and, believe it or not, deer. Laidlaw is fifteen miles south of Craters of the Moon National Monument. Readers of past books will recognize that location as the spot where two highly educated women vanished under very unusual conditions. If how they disappeared didn't attract interest, where they were found might have. They were located far into the rocks in an area nobody believed they Would go. Nobody believed they'd travel that far because of extreme temperatures and the major fact that their two small dogs had been left behind in the blazing cab of their vehicle. They loved the dogs like they were their kids. One physician died, and a perished. Craters of the Moon National Monument is truly hell on Earth, and it is fitting that the story of the women is in Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail.

retired teacher


Richard "Rick" Bendele
Blaine County Idaho Missing Person
1996 - Laidlaw Corral area
This is a similar truck to what Richard Bendele drove before he stalled and disappeared. It was discovered in the desert north of Rupert near Laidlaw Park.
County scales back search in mystery of missing Burley man
Richard "Rick" Bendele worked at J.R. Simplot in Heyburn, Idaho. During a hunting trip in the Laidlaw Corral area north of Rupert, Idaho, he called his mother to say his truck had stalled on a lonely desert road and was going to walk for help. He has not been seen since. His truck was found. Several searches were conducted to no avail.
If you have information about Richard Bendele, contact:
Blaine County Idaho Sheriff's Office
(208) 788-5555
Vitals: Height: 5'11" Weight: 170 Eyes: Green Hair: Brown
Age when missing: 29 – Age in 2014: 47
Poster by East Idaho Cold Cases, Inc. Information current as of August 2014
DOB: 8 Aug 1967
Missing: 17 Nov 1996

Richard Bendele

Richard Bendele was a twenty-nine-year-old supervisor for the J. R. Simplot Company in Heyburn, Idaho. He was described as happy-go-lucky and a very good guy. He was a married father of two with a life in transition. He was getting a divorce and trying to keep his days busy with sporting activities. He loved fishing and hunting. He grew up with his dad taking him to the desert north of Burley for hunting. He knew the area well and enjoyed the flat land for hunting. This is

one of the very few stories of a hunter hunting a desert environment.

On November 17, 1996, Richard drove his blue Chevrolet fleet side short-bed pickup up into the Laidlaw Corral area. At 6:00 p.m. he called his mom on his cell phone. He told her the battery was going low, and he had it attached to the cigarette lighter in his truck. He told her that the truck had broken down, and he wasn't even sure where he was and couldn't describe it adequately for her to understand. Richard's mom called the sheri at two in the morning on November 18 and advised them to start searching the desert north of Burley for her son.

On Monday, November 18, deputies located Bendele's truck northeast of the Kimama-Minidoka Crossing. The vehicle was found to have a quarter tank of gas. It was found inside of Blaine County, and they agreed to take the lead on the search. They looked throughout the area of the vehicle and could not find a trace of Richard. In an undated article in the Times, they explain what searchers did on November 19: "Searchers Tuesday were aided by three tracking dogs and late in the day a J. R. Simpiot helicopter. The weather lifted enough for a search plane to get in the air. But that lasted only about 15 minutes before the weather socked in again forcing the plane to give up the search."

By now you are starting to realize weather often comes into an area and inhibits search e orts in these cases. The canines could not pick up a scent, and the search was canceled after four days. Various articles confirm that a combination of rain and snow hampered search e orts late Monday and Tuesday. The high point in the search saw thirty-five SAR members in the field from Blaine, Lincoln, and Minidoka Counties. Richard was never found.

In many of the cases I write about, you may be able to come up with a rational explanation for why the people are not found. This is one incident that I don't understand why Richard's body hasn't been found in the last twenty years. The land is slow rolling, and you can see for miles to the horizon. There are very few trees, and anything metallic should shine in the bright sun. There were rumors that Richard may have tried to drop out of society because of his divorce. Nobody in his family buys that idea. Think about that theory. There would be no more isolated and inhospitable place to design a disappearance. There's no place to hitchhike, no ranch houses, no resources, and no ponds or lakes for water. He would've been tens of miles from the nearest phone or occupied residence. The other main point that blows this theory up: Richard was scheduled to be paid the following week.

If you were going to run o , I think you'd wait for your cash.

Here is a reminder of the profile points that are nailed on this case. Four dog teams could not locate a scent trail. This is very odd considering there wouldn't have been other people or vehicles in the region to contaminate the area. Bad weather inundated the search area shortly after Richard vanished. In many of the cases I've written about in my last book, people called loved ones on their cell phones and seemed confused and did not know where they were. Considering that Richard grew up hunting in this region, it is surprising that he couldn't tell his mom where he was.

After twenty plus years, it is highly unlikely that Richard's body will ever be found, especially since he disappeared in an area that is rarely traveled on foot. In 2002 Richard's wife petitioned the Idaho Superior Court got and received a declaration that Richard was deceased, thus allowing her to obtain benefits for her children. The ironic part of a death ruling is that Richard is no longer legally considered missing.

Ronald S. Gray

Missing: 09/19/2008, Nez Perce National Forest, ID

Age at disappearance: 62 years

Point of Separation* Cluster Zone

If anyone could live in the outdoors and survive brutal conditions, it was Ronald Gray. He had a military background with tours of Vietnam where he had to eat bugs and snakes to survive. When he came back from the war, he became a local police o icer in Massachusetts and then spent the majority of his career as a Massachusetts State Trooper, eventually retiring after twen-ty-six years.

Ronald loved the outdoors and had made two previous trips to the same area of Idaho to hunt elk and deer. He knew the landscape, and he trusted the hunting guides who established his camp. Gray was the type of hunter who enjoyed the challenges of hunting alone, which is what he did on September 19,2008. He had met with the hunting guides, who told him where they stashed extra supplies in the woods. He carried a global-positioning unit to find the supplies and establish his exact location at any time. Ronald told the guide service that he would meet them on September 23, a date he never kept.

Ron Gray

One of the largest searches in the history of the Nez Perce National Forest was undertaken for Ronald Gray. Even members from the state police in Massachusetts came to Idaho to assist in the search. Helicopters, horses, and ground teams scoured the area but found nothing. There was a rumor that he had made a radio call saying that he had hurt his knee, but this was never confirmed.

Authorities searched a large section of the eighty-five hundred square miles of the Nez Perce for two weeks. Again, they found nothing. On October 15, 2008, the search for Ronald Gray was ter-minated. Since the termination of the SAR, hundreds of hunters and searchers have continued to look for Ronald, but they have never found any of his property or Ronald.

Connie Johnson

Missing: 10/05/18, Fog Mountain Idaho

Age at Disappearance: 76 years

Weather* Canines* Point of Separation* Cluster Zone* Hunter

Terrence Woods Missing: 10/05/18, Penman Mine, Idaho

Age at disappearance: 26 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Cluster Zone

In my years of researching missing people, I have rarely found something as unusual as the disappearance of Connie Johnson and Terrence Woods on October 5, 2018. There is a 50-year age gap between the two victims and the di erences in the stories are wide.

Terrence Woods and Connie Johnson

The one consistent element in these cases, both disappeared in the same general geographic area and were reported to a small rural Idaho county on the same day four hours apart.

The first story I will cover is Connie Johnson, a former teacher, United States Forest Service Ranger and mom. Ms. Johnson was a former high school teacher and a retired backcountry ranger at the Moose Creek Ranger station on the Selway River.

On October 2, 2018, Connie was working as a wilderness camp cook for hunters and employed by Richie Outfitters. The camp was established on Fog Mountain 14 miles west of the same ranger station where she had retired, Moose Creek. The camp could only be accessed by horseback or hiking; it was remote. Connie had routinely guided people through this wilderness and knew the area extremely well. The October 27, 2018 edition of the Spokesman Review had a timeline of the events surrounding Connie's disappearance, "She was last seen on October 2, when the hunters left the camp for a while. The remote area is accessible by horseback or foot. On October 3 the hunters reportedly had radio contact with Johnson, Idaho County Sheri Doug Giddings said, but they were unable to understand what she was saying. When they returned to camp October 5, Johnson and her dog, Ace were gone. An intensive search was launched, involving aircraft from the U.S. Air Force and Idaho National Guard, the Clearwater County Backcountry Helicopter Rescue Team, along with several teams of tracking dogs and searchers on foot."

There was a formal ten-day search for Connie followed by several searches by Richie Outfitters and even a private searcher that was hired, all finding nothing.

There was no additional information about this incident until October 23, 2018, when Connie's dog, Ace (Border Collie) walked into the Moose Creek Ranger Station airstrip and up to a pilot. The October 30, 2018 edition of the Idaho County Free Press had this information, "According to Undersheri Gorges, Ace came onto the airstrip, located 14 miles from where Johnson was working at a hunting camp. He was reported found in good condition, "not hungry or struggling in any way," and was checked over by a vet. Last week, Sheri Doug Giddings stated that the dog was verified by the family as belonging to Johnson. The family worked with True North Search Dogs, a nonprofit organization out of Helena, Montana to transport Ace back to the search area in an attempt to alert on Johnson." The dog did not take searchers back into the mountains, and Johnson was not found. Readers can refer to the story of Todd Ho lander, a missing hiker I have written about who also vanished in Idaho. He was with his dog in the Seven Devils area, and he was never located. His dog returned and was discovered 30 days after he vanished.

There were several posts on Facebook from Richie Outfitters and others about this case. Newspapers reported inclement weather hit the region during the search. Forward-Looking Infrared Radar on Air Force Helicopters never found anything, as did multiple canine teams that participated.

If there was one person I have documented in this book that should not have vanished, knew the region intimately, had survival knowledge and was in good physical condition, it was Connie Johnson. I can only recall four other retired or on-duty rangers that have ever disappeared, three of the four have never been found. The October 12, 2018, KLEWTV had these details about Connie, “This isn’t some pilgrim in their first rodeo, “Chris Adkins, Connie’s colleague, said.”

“This is a woman who spent literally the last 25 years of her life on foot, in the wilderness alone doing her wilderness ranger work.”

There have been several disappearances in this region of Idaho, and this is the only cluster in the state where there are women that vanished in the wilderness and were never located.

As the Idaho County Sheri was getting a call about missing person Connie Johnson, they were also being notified about the disappearance of Terrence Woods, a 26-year old film crew member from Maryland. In reality, Connie’s case was the second one of the day for the Idaho County sheri , the first case follows.

Terrence was a graduate of the University of Maryland Merrill College of Journalism, had traveled the world making documentary movies and was now working for RAW Productions from the United Kingdom making a film segment on the Penman Mine, 20 miles south of Orogrande and 28 miles southwest of Connie Johnson’s disappearance.

The film crew was working in the area of the mine when something unusual happened as is described in the October 11, 2018 edition of the Idaho News, “He was last seen near the Penman Mine near Orogrande. Workers on the scene told the sheri ’s o ice he had been acting strangely. As the crew was wrapping up, he approached a steep drop, “he went over the edge, and there were several people watching him including one of the local guys, and they said he just decided to take o , and he shot down that hill,” said Doug Gidding.” Crew members tried to follow Terrence but fell behind and lost him.

Terrence Johnson was reported missing at 5:30 p.m. on October 5, Connie Johnson was reported missing at 9:30 p.m. Part of the time delay is the remoteness of the hunter camp that Connie had been working.

I did a bit of searching about the Penman Mine. It was a location

where gold and silver were mined. A search of RAW Productions site showed they did a show called, The Missing, Jungle Gold and Gold Rush. They had a 12-person production team on site at the mine when Terrence disappeared. Crew members stated they had no idea why he all of a sudden took o running down the hillside.

Search teams scoured the Idaho wilderness for a week looking for Terrence. Multiple jurisdictions contributed to the search e ort that included aircraft, dog teams and rain hampered tracking e orts according to the October 13, 2018 edition of the East Idaho News.

The disappearances of Connie and Terrence are bizarre, makes no sense and are unsolved. In spite of massive search e orts and a heroic attempt to work multiple cases simultaneously, the Idaho County Sheri did everything possible to locate these people. It is very odd that the only disappearances of females in the wilderness I have documented from Idaho are near where Connie went missing. In a very eerie coincidence, the photo of Connie shows her wearing a Lochsa Historical Ranger Station T-shirt, refer to the location of Fred Vinneau.

Illinois

Name Date Missing Age* Sex

Ralph Savaglio 10/27/51-5:00 p.m.* 19* M

Thomas Inman 10/27/51-5:00 p.m.* 27*M

William Brown 10/27/51-5:00 P.M.* 31*M

Robert Sawyer 10/28/51-2:00 a.m.* 20*M

Max Wage 10/28/51-2:00 a.m.* 26*M

Chris Stasiak 01/11/2016-1:00 p.m. *44*M

Ralph Savaglio, 19 years

Thomas Inman, 27 years

William Brown, 31 years

Robert Sawyer, 10 years

Max Wage, 26 years

In my last eight books on the Missing 411 series, I have documented over twenty cases of missing people that fit our profile in the southern Lake Michigan region. The cases are some of the most unusual, unexplainable and nearly all involve water. In Missing 411- LAW I wrote extensively about the Great Lakes Triangle and the variety of di erent types of disappearances that center on the Lake Michigan area. When I first started to research the case you are reading now, I couldn't believe what I found; it further emphasizes how scary Lake Michigan can be. On October 27, 1951, three friends, two from Waukegan, Illinois (Inman and Savaglio) and William Brown of Zion decided to group together and went duck hunting on Lake Michigan. Waukegan is a small city with an excellent harbor approximately fifteen miles north of Chicago on the western side of the Lake. Zion is a smaller city just five miles north of Waukegan. In the morning hours, the three friends launched their sixteen-foot boat from the Waukegan Harbor and told family members that they'd be back that night.

At approximately 7:00 p.m. on October 27, family members of the hunters checked the harbor, didn't see the boat and called the police and the coast guard reporting the men as missing. Ten miles south of Waukegan is the Wilmette Coast Guard Station. They received the report of the missing men and activated a thirty-foot coast guard search vessel, CG30315. The crash boat was led by Ensign Max Wage and Boatswains Mate Robert Sawyer. They pulled out of the harbor and onto Lake Michigan at 11:00 p.m. Early in the morning of October 28, the United States Coast Guard notified press agencies that they lost contact with their boat sometime between 1-2:00 am. They stated that they immediately dispatched a large variety of vessels and planes to look for the now five missing people.

The search e ort after the Coast Guard boat vanished included four seaplanes from Glenview Naval Air Station, two, two hundred foot cutters from Holland, Michigan, the Sundew and Hollyhock, one Naval patrol craft, the destroyer U.S. Daniel A. Joy and sixteen other Coast Guard craft and a contingent of 250 active members of the armed services. At the end of October 30, the Chicago Tribune ran this interview, "Captain Hawley (US Coast Guard) said the complete disappearance of the missing crash boat mystified him. If it had sunk, he said, debris should have been sighted: if it had not, the boat should be in the area search." The authorities in the Coast Guard stated that this was one of the largest searches this region of the Great Lakes had undertaken.

On October 29 at 4:10 a.m., an American Airlines plane captained by

Charles O'Connor had reported seeing what they believed to be green flares over the lake near the search zone. The Coast Guard responded three vessels into that area and found nothing.

The massive search for the five missing men did produce results. On October 29 they located the hunter's boat. One report indicated that the boat had washed ashore near the Waukegan Harbor, another stated it was located 200 feet o the harbor entrance with the additional details that only six inches of the boat being out of the water. They reported finding one shotgun in the boat, meaning the boat had not overturned.

Late in the night of October 29, reports stated that the search was ending because of rough water on the lake. When I read this stoppage of the search, I was shocked. The United States Coast Guard regularly enters some of the most turbulent waters in the world, to cancel the water search for two of their own is a surprising statement. Planes continued to fly.

On October 30, a search plane spotted a small amount of debris twenty miles o the coast of Illinois and sent a Coast Guard boat to investigate. The November 2, 1951 edition of the Lansing State Journal had these details, "A PBY search plane found pieces of the guardsmen's boat, floating about twenty miles east of Wilmette, Illinois, and notified the Coast Guard Cutter Woodbine. A chief petty o icer aboard the Woodbine identified the pieces of wreckage as the side panel of the engine compartment and the cover of the boat's battery compartment. It was assumed that the men, Robert Sawyer, BM 3/C, Detroit, and Max Wage, engineman 1/C, Milwaukee, had drowned. They went out Sunday to look for the duck hunters." The statement of the petty o icer is puzzling. It is a stringent policy that Coast Guardsmen wear personal flotation devices (PFD's) when on a thirty-foot boat. If the men were wearing their PFD, where are the bodies? If they weren't wearing them, why can't they locate them floating?

There was no other information about the search for either group of men until November 9. The November 9, 1951 edition of the Jacksonville Daily Journal had these details, "The body of a duck hunter lost on an expedition that cost five lives was found today on South Beach on Lake Michigan. Thomas Inman, 27, of Waukegan, brother of one of the three lost hunters, identified the body as that of Ralph Savaglio, 19 of Waukegan. The body was clad in a green hunting jacket." Did you catch that last sentence? Where was the rest of his clothing? As if something unusual was happening, the November 11, 1951 copy of the Chicago Tribune had these findings,

“The body of William Brown, 31, of Wadsworth Road near Zion, one of the three duck hunters who drowned on October 27 when their small boat overturned in Lake Michigan, near Waukegan, was taken from the lake yesterday near the Great Lakes Naval Training Center.” This location is approximately six miles south of Waukegan. I’ve stated in almost every book I’ve written; the press manipulates the story so the public can accept it without questioning the circumstance, “when their small boat overturned,” that did not happen as evident by the shotgun being found in the boat.

I referenced a Lake Michigan current flow map. It shows that the water along the western edge of the lake near Waukegan flows south to its far southern border and then starts to flow up the eastern side. How did the Coast Guard boat wreckage end up twenty miles towards the middle of the lake? There is no way they went into the lake that far, they knew the hunters were in close to the harbor looking for birds.

When I wrote the segment (Missing 411- LAW) about airplane disappearances in the Michigan and Lake Michigan region, I chronicled a story of one jet traveling out into the water looking for an unidentified flying object, that Air Force jet disappeared. The commanders scrambled a second jet that headed into the area where the first jet disappeared, it also vanished, neither was ever located. The missing jet story sounds familiar to this story, except this dealt with boats.

United States Coast Guardsmen Max wage and Robert Sawyer were never found, nor was hunter Thomas Inman. There was never any recovery of any large pieces of the crash boat. The mystery of Lake Michigan continues.

Chris Stasiak

Missing: 01/11/2016,1:00 p.m., Cahokia, IL

Age at disappearance: 44 years

Weather* Previously Searched* Unknown Cause of Death

This story may seem odd to hunters who follow their sport into the far reaches of remote moun-tains and faraway provinces. This happened in Cahokia, Illinois, just one mile from the Mississippi

River and a suburb of Saint Louis, Missouri. I have documented two other missing person cases in the greater St. Louis area that were in close proximity to the Mississippi River. I have documented in five hooks over a dozen cases of people who either disappeared and were later found in or near the Mississippi north of Cahokia. I have stated Many times that water is closely related to many of the disappearances I've documented.

On January 11, 2016, at 1:00 p.m., Chris Stasiak was dropped o in the 300 block of McBride Avenue, so he could go bow hunting for deer. He was last seen carrying his deer stand, bow, and graphite arrows and a backpack along the railroad tracks just under State Route 3. He was walking adjacent to Prairie Dupont Creek less than a mile from the Mississippi River.

Chris was supposed to be out of the woods by nighttime. He did not come out, and the local police were notified. The police contacted the Illinois State Police, Saint Clair County K-9 Team, Eureka Fire Protection District, and regional SAR teams. They all responded to the area and searched for several days. The crews working the night shift brought in a helicopter with FLIR. The K-9s could not track any scent, and the FLIR found nothing of value.

Michael Stasiak, Chris's brother, made the following statement about the disappearance in the January 27, 2016, edition of BND. com: "Police searched a canal along the woods several times with concerns the hunter somehow fell in and drowned. Choked with flood waters at the time he went missing, the canal is now almost entirely drained. 'I never thought he was in that water,' Stasiak said. 'He had graphite arrows with him. If they were in the water, they'd float and we would have found him.'"

Late in the search e ort, police did look through Chris's home for evidence of what may have happened. They found that he had left behind two hundred dollars in cash, food assistance cards, a disability card, and his mobile phone. Michael Stasiak did state that if his brother were going to take o , he would not leave his cash and cell phone behind.

In the weeks after his disappearance, the press made statements that Christopher had warrants and speculated that this might be the reason he had run. The warrant was for driving on a suspended license, according to BND.com. In my years in law enforcement, it was very rare that someone to go to such an e ort to stage their death for a misdemeanor warrant. In fact, I don't think I've ever heard of that.

Additional research showed that multiple canine teams on different days each tried to pick up a scent and track down Stasiak. They all failed in their e ort.

In the weeks following Chris's disappearance, family and friends stated that they feared some type of foul play had occurred. They said that they didn't know who would want to hurt the guy, but they also

stated that the disappearance made no sense. They did confirm that Chris had gone missing in the past for a few days at a time, but nothing like this. It's normal for family and law enforcement to start talking about foul play when all other avenues have been exhausted. There needs to be some type of "normal" answer for the concerned: foul play is usually that response.

If flood waters were rolling high when Chris vanished, it may make sense that he was washed down the creek and into the Mississippi River. Part of this explanation doesn't hold water though: the body may have been washed downstream, but not the heavier items that he was carrying. I believe that these items would've been found in the creek when it was drained.

There were no additional details in this case until a February 18, 2017 article on the KMOV website, "A body was discovered Saturday afternoon in an area where a local man went missing 13 months ago." The article stated that a wood cutter found a body 75 yards o the roadway in any area previously searched. Later in the same article was this, "It was so weird because there were so many people searching over there and when I heard it tonight. When they were searching that area, it's like wow because everyone was right around that area, "said Stasiak's brother. Law enforcement stated the body was going in for autopsy, but the results were never released and an explanation about how searchers missed the body was never explained.

Iowa

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Jeremiah Harris 12/04/93* 18* M

Jeremiah Harris

Missing: 12/04/93, 2:00 a.m., Red Rock Reservoir, Knoxville, IA Age at disappearance: 18 years

Point of Separation* Canines* Missing Clothing

In my books I write about coincidences and how they are routine in the incidents I cover. The disappearance of Jeremiah Harris has many coincidences that cannot be ignored.

Jeremiah was an eighteen-year-old young man living in Newton, Iowa, approximately twenty miles north of Knoxville and fifteen miles

north of Red Rock Reservoir. On December 3, 1993, Jeremiah had made plans with friends to hunt deer in the area around the reservoir. The group of four left Newton and arrived at the site at approximately 2:00 a.m. They split up into a group of two and headed into the woods. In an unexplained series of events, somehow Jeremiah got separated from his partner and vanished. Later that day, when he didn't arrive to meet his buddies, they started to search. He was reported as missing on Sunday night.

The search formally started early Monday morning. The Marion County sheri was in charge of the search e ort. They brought in Bloodhounds to look for a scent and airplanes to look from the air. They also brought in ground searchers to comb the area. The region has many farms scattered throughout the area with many roads. The search ended Monday without the canines finding a scent and searchers finding no evidence he was in the search area.

On Tuesday morning a deputy was searching a farm that had been searched the previous day, from air and ground. A December 7, 1993, article in the Daily Reporter had the following account of what the deputy found: "we had one of the deputies who went around and was looking at peripheral areas and was looking at this farm pond and found the victim,' Mertz said. 'The area is so open over there we thought we didn't even need to look there, really.' The body was near a brush pile not far from the farm pond." The story sounds a little strange at this point, but pretty mundane. There are times when reporters get a story slightly incorrect; in this instance it almost sounds as though someone didn't want you to hear the true story.

An article in the December 7, 1993, edition of the Oskaloosa Herald had an amazing story with the title "Hunter Dies of Exposure." Here is what it stated: "Dr. Gordon Arnott, Sr. county coroner, said it appears the man tried to cross a partially ice covered pond in the night and became soaked. Harris got back to land and took his clothes o to dry and crawled into a tree. Searchers found him there this morning. 'He just died of exposure apparently, 'Arnott said."

I had to go back to the first article describing the location of the body to truly understand how di erent the two descriptions really are. In the world where I live, this isn't that unusual. There is usually one version that vaguely tells a story that the public can easily swallow; then, occasionally there is another version that tells the truth, partially. No, I do not believe that Jeremiah tried to cross a partially frozen pond. He was from the area; he knew the risks associated with cold water; he was not an idiot. Even if he did fall in a pond and was cold,

wouldn't you go to the closest farmhouse and ask for assistance? The last thing I'd do is crawl into a tree where there is no protection from the elements. If this is the first book in the Missing 411 series that you are reading, this may seem a bit blunt. Please understand that I have written about many cases where the victims seem to be found un-der very unusual circumstances, sometimes completely or partially disrobed. The logic behind the majority of these incidents is beyond anything acceptable.

Let's go back to finding the body in a tree. They state they found the clothes lying on the ground. If you were in the least embarrassed by the incident and didn't want to go to the farmhouse, you sure wouldn't want to go into a tree where people could see you. Remember, it's December; there are no leaves in the trees. Another major fact that makes no sense is that Jeremiah was supposedly wearing hunter orange. If his clothes were draped on the ground, why wouldn't the airplanes searching the prior day see the orange on the ground and Jeremiah in the tree? In Missing 411: The Devil's in the Detail on page 349,1 placed a table that depicted seventy-four incidents where an area was searched and the victim was later found in the area that was previously searched. In my humble opinion, it appears that this area where Jeremiah was found had been previously searched. If he was in the tree at the time when it was first searched, he should've been seen.

The fact that bloodhounds didn't track his scent is another major indicator that this matches the profile that's described in five other books. Why couldn't the dogs follow Jeremiah's scent?

Jeremiah disappeared with his firearm. Why didn't he fire his gun to alert his friends he needed assistance?

I did make a thorough search of the Internet and could not locate a confirmation of Jeremiah's cause of death. In many of the incidents I investigate, a cause of death could not be confirmed, and it is rarely told to the public.

I would have liked to see a photo of Jeremiah in the tree and understand his positioning and get clarity on how he got there. I'd also like to get clarity on how his clothes were found on the ground and how far they were from the tree. If you are someone who has followed the Missing 411 series, this incident will not surprise you. If you have never read any of the other books, maybe put this down and read a few of the other books to catch up.

In Missing 411: Eastern United States, I wrote about an incident involving a farmer just eight miles west of where Jeremiah was found. The circumstances of the disappearance are ba ling. The coincidence that the farmer's and Jeremiah's incidents are so close in proximity is sobering.

In one of the strangest coincidences I have ever experienced, I was doing an archive search on this case and found the name "Jeremiah Harris," about a young man who died in a creek. I looked again and thought another article had another fictitious account of what happened. I looked again and found it was in Fort Collins, Colorado. A December 7, 1993, article in the Colorado Springs Gazette stated that Jeremiah Harris and Brandon Russell were found in Spring Creek, dead; both were sixteen.

Kentucky

Name Date Missing» Age* Sex

Eddie Nichols 12/03/74»21 • M

Eddie Nichols Missing: 12/03/74, Verona, KY Age at disappearance: 21 years Lack of Scent» Point of Separation» Hunter

I've read hundreds of cases on missing hunters, but nothing comes close to the unusual way this disappearance rolled out. A law enforcement o icer doing his job, two hunters in the wilderness and an unsolved missing person are all issues that still haunt this region of Kentucky.

On December 3, 1974 friends David Stites, twenty years old and Eddie Nichols twenty-one years old left Florence Kentucky and headed for a wilderness area northwest of Verona, Kentucky. They were in a region north of Highway 42 bordered by the Ohio River. Stites parked his vehicle and the pair headed into the forest.

At approximately 3:00 p.m., Kentucky state Conservation o icer Atlas Lynn was patrolling the area and located the pair's vehicle. Lynn was in the area because of reports of poaching and was looking for violators. As Lynn was checking the car, David walked up to the warden; it was now 3:30 p.m. Stites questioned the young man about what he was doing in the area and asked for his identification. This December 5, 1974 article in the Cincinnati Enquirer article has more details, "The game warden states that Stites showed up at the car at about 3:30 p.m., but they could find no evidence of deer poaching. He said they questioned Stites but let him go. Later, Lynn said he found

two rifles in the car that hadn't been there before. He said Stites then admitted that the pair had been hunting deer out of season and that he had hidden the rifles in the grass when he spotted the game wardens, It was then that Stites told him that Nichols was missing, Lynn said, and the search was begun."

The scenario that Warden Lynn was faced with was two poachers; one was caught, one was missing. He called headquarters, called for reinforcements, and the search was started. The area of the search was slightly under 10,000 acres. Search and rescue ground teams, canines and two aircraft worked the event. Warden Lynn did question Stites about the circumstances of Eddie going missing. David stated that they arrived in the hunting grounds at 9:00 a.m. While they were hunting, he and Eddie got separated, and he was never able to find him. He came back to the vehicle hoping that his friend was waiting.

One of the side stories to this event that made news at the time was the presence of wild pigs in the area. There were stories that maybe it was possible that a pig had killed Eddie Nichols. It was later revealed that the pigs were 30-50 pounds in size and that they never located any of Eddie's clothing or any location where there appeared to be an attack.

There was another story that indicated that there was foul play and that Eddie had been killed. The police gave David Stites a polygraph test about what he had told them, he passed. Law enforcement was now working under the belief they had a poacher that vanished in an area that had a hard border, the Ohio River. I've been in this area many times, and I can guarantee that nobody is casually swimming across this large body of water, it's vast in this area.

A week after Eddie disappeared, a person was hiking the area of the search and located two socks, one in the other, and he turned these over to police. The socks were identified as belonging to Eddie Nichols. There were others who found bones in the same search area only to discover weeks later that these were animals.

One year after Eddie Nichols vanished, his family made a request that the Kentucky State Police enter the case, they did. One of the articles about this incident did say that the police believed David Stites' story about the facts surrounding this story and that he was not a suspect in the disappearance.

It has now been over four decades since Eddie Nichols disappeared, he has never been found.

Louisiana

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Walter Mitchell 01/01/81* 23*M

Walter Mitchell

Missing: 02/01/81, Napoleonville, LA

Age at disappearance: 23 years

Weather* Canines* Water* Point of Separation

This case is a monumental first. After almost nine years of research, this is the first time I have found a disappearance in the state of Louisiana that matches our profile points. I have continually stated that this state should have many cases based on its landscape and location.

The precise location of this case was hard to nail down. One article stated it was northwest of Napoleonville with the east side bordered by the Mississippi River. Another report stated it was near the Ceadat Grove Plantation (that was the correct spelling per the article). The last article said this happened near Bayou Lafourche.

On February 1, 1981, twenty-three-year-old Walter Mitchell was hunting with two unnamed friends. This St. Mary and Franklin Banner article had these details, “Falterman (sheri) said Mitchell went hunting with two friends on Sunday, Feb. 1 in a marshy area near Bayou. Lafourche. The three hunters split up but remained within shouting distance. When the weather turned nasty, Mitchell’s two friends left the area and called to him to join them. He shouted back the friends said, but he never came out of the woods.” Sheri Falterman did say that he believed the two friends and the claim seemed legitimate.

Law enforcement put two helicopters in the air, ground teams, three wheelers and deputies in boats. The Civil Air Patrol flew dozens of missions with multiple aircraft. Falterman stated that they knew Mitchell had a rifle and matches, so he could start a fire to keep warm.

The search continued for over a week, and then there was this article in the February 11, 1981 edition of the Daily Review, “Rain and winds gusting up to 50 mph forced the Civil Air Patrol to cancel all flights

including a special mission to be flown with “air sni ing dogs” from Fort Scott, Tennessee. They supposedly can sni human beings from the air,” Falterman said. “But they couldn’t do anything with the tornado warning we had, so they’re going to try to fly them tomorrow.” The last update on the search I could locate was twelve days after he disappeared and was in this February 12, 1981 edition of the Assumption Pioneer, “Searchers optimistic about finding a Thibodaux man who mysteriously disappeared while hunting Assumption Parish Feb 1 have temporarily suspended their search Tuesday because of inclement weather.”

Water has always been one of the profile points in the cases I have investigated. Swamps and bogs have also been near the front of the line of profile points for missing people. Mitchell vanished in a swamp and was communicating with friends before he disappeared. This behavior reminds me of other cases where witnesses report hearing the voice responding, but cannot find the victim. It’s almost as though the victim is somewhere else but can still hear the witnesses.

This case has four major profile points that are a central figure on this incident. Once the hunters separated, bad weather moved in, and Mitchell vanished. Canines could not pick up and track the victim’s scent. Bad weather played a crucial role in the initial disappearance and the subsequent search.

I could not locate another article indicating that the search for Mitchell was ever started again after its stop because of the weather. I also could not find anything showing the hunter was ever located.

Maine

Name Date Missing» Age* Sex

Richard Knight 10/24/1899* 19*M

David Brown 11/18/22* 51*M

Mertley Johnson 11/18/22* 24*M

Mitchell Kaufman 11/05/30* 37* M

Dana Drake 11/24/38* 52*M

Raymond Dolliver 11/18/50* 17*M

Evo Recchia 11/20/50* 23*M

Ludger Belanger 11/25/75* 25*M

Fortunato Rivera 11/13/93, 10:00 a.m.* 79*M

Robert Smith 11/18/97* 70*M

Richard Knight

Missing: 10/24/1899, Bemis, ME

Age at disappearance: 19

Point of Separation* Weather* Cluster Zone* Hunter

I can remember when I was in high school that a teacher told us, “we study history for a reason.” At the time I believed the reason was to torture us by forcing memorization. As I got older and started to look at trend analysis, I realized that there is an excellent reason why we study history, it can show us mistakes made in the past and, it can show trends.

I made my first trip to Maine when my daughter (Nicole) was looking at colleges to attend, and we visited the University of Maine and their female hockey program. Nic did get an invitation to play for Maine, which made dad very proud, the real take away from that trip was the pure beauty of the forest, coast, and towns. I can remember that I was impressed with how thick the forests were and how few people seemed to occupy the state. When I started to track missing people in Maine, I looked at the countryside in an entirely di erent way. Bemis, Maine is a small town twenty miles south of Canada and fifteen miles east of New Hampshire in the far southwestern portion ˚f the state. It sits on a large lake and is surrounded on three sides by lush and thick forests. On October 24, 1899, Richard Knight was described as nineteen years old and was employed at the steward for the Poland Spring Hotel. Knight had the day o work, he and his friend, Arthur Wilson decided to go deer hunting on the east side of town. The pair left early in the morning and stayed together when they entered the woods.

About three miles into the woods, the friends stopped at a large stump and decided to separate and meet back at 1:00 p.m.

Arthur Wilson told authorities he arrived back at the agreed upon meeting location and couldn’t locate Richard. He looked for his buddy, called his name and then left for town to get assistance.

Late on the afternoon on October 24, several friends of Arthurs shot their guns o in an attempt to get Richard's attention. They never heard any return fire. The formal search for Richard Knight started on October 25.

The small city of Bemis took the disappearance of one of their young men seriously. Hunters that were in the field looking for game stopped, and everyone who was available assisted in looking for the young hunter. The largest lumber mill in the area, Berlin Mills closed and sent every male employee to help. Three hundred searchers were transported by train from Rumford Falls and Rangeley Lakes to comb the countryside looking for Richard.

Searchers were sent a note from a clairvoyant stating that the young hunter was still barely alive and unconscious. He would be found five miles from where he and Arthur split up. Several hundred searchers covered all areas within the area the clairvoyant stated. This November 2, 1899 article in the Boston Globe had this information on the search, "No more thorough search could have been made. The clairvoyant's prediction was not sustained, not a trace or a vestige of the lost man was found. The incessant downpour of chilling rain, the dripping trees and underbrush, and the water-soaked ground made the search di icult and uncomfortable." The eight-day search for Richard was over; they found nothing.

During the weeks following the hunter's disappearance, there were multiple smaller search e orts. The Knight family o ered a three-hundred-dollar reward.

In the thousands of missing person cases I have read and researched, the vast majority search, rescue, and investigation are over when the initial search is terminated. It is an infrequent event that there is a formal investigation into what happened and if there was criminal activity at play. When I was researching this story, I was surprised to see that the Maine State Police sent a detective to Bemis to look into the disappearance. I was more astonished at what the in-vestigator told the press about the possibility of other related cases.

State Detective Odlin was sent to Bemis to research the Richard Knight disappearance. The investigator arrived in town on November 12 and spent several days in the woods looking, investigating and then meeting with witnesses. This November 16, 1899 article in the Bangor Daily Whip had some interesting details, "Mr. Odlin is interested in the case of the mysterious disappearance of this gentleman and will devote the next few weeks or months to search for him among his

other business transactions." Later in the same article is this, "This is not the only case," said Mr. Odlin today. "There are many cases like it." Odlin gave a lengthy interview stating that he would stay until he had an explanation or found a body. He did not go into any detail about the other cases of missing men. I can tell you that I have written about many cases in the State of Maine.

There were no updates on this case until July of 1900. A Native American came to Mr. Knight and told him that he thinks he solved his son's death. He said he could take him to a skull in the woods and in the area where his son went missing. Mr. Knight got three other friends to accompany the individual into the woods where they found a skull protruding from the dirt. Upon close examination, the head showed a condition with the teeth that did not match Richard's. A physician later examined the skull and declared it was not Mr. Knight's son.

Articles stated there were over one thousand men that searched for Richard for a cumulative total of three weeks. The search never found a rifle, clothes or a body.

David Brown and Mertley Johnson

Missing: 11/18/22, Big Bog Dam, ME

Age at disappearance: 51 years and 24 years

Water* Previously Searched

This story is placed in a book about hunters because these two brave individuals were hunting a predator.

One of the most dangerous jobs in any law enforcement classification is that of a game warden. Wardens are commonly confronting people with legally loaded firearms in the middle of nowhere, and many times the law enforcement o icer is alone. There are numerous incidents where wardens are confronting people who legally cannot be possessing firearms because they are convicted criminals yet don't believe they will ever see someone in the middle of the woods. Other times people are illegally taking game and never believe a law enforcement o icer will catch them. In almost any instance where a warden confronts an individual, the warden does not have backup for tens of miles in any direction, and sometimes the next o icer is over an hour away.

The biggest news in the northeastern United States in 1922-23 was the

case of two Maine wardens who disappeared on November 18, 1922. The wardens (Brown and Johnson) had been briefed about an ongoing case of beavers disappearing. Commissioner Willis Parsons of the Maine Wildlife Department felt that Canadians were illegally crossing the border and taking the beaver, and he wanted the violations to stop. It is unclear from all articles I've read why Parsons felt Canadians were doing this, but it is clear that beavers were disappearing.

Parson sent two of the best Wardens in the state of Maine to camp in an area near Big Bog Dam, sixty miles north of Kineo Station. David Brown and Mertley Johnson were handpicked by the chief game warden from Maine to work the beaver incident. Both men were known to be extremely tough, very safe, and dependable, and they knew the outdoors. Several people stated that the men knew never to walk on ice when it was melting; they would never unnecessarily put themselves in a dangerous situation; they were true professionals.

The plan was to put several wardens into the area of Big Bog Dam during the winter months on a surveillance assignment to catch the culprits. Brown and Johnson went into the area November 13 and were last seen at Desroches Half-Way Camp on November 14; both were to be out by November 18. When the wardens didn't appear back at the o ice, law enforcement teams went into the area to search. Commissioner Parsons made several statements to the press, saying that he felt that both wardens had met with death at the hands of Canadian poachers. He enlisted assistance from detectives in Quebec and their own warden force. Parsons also stationed six teams of three wardens each in the Big Bog Dam area in the middle of winter to help search for the bodies and to catch poachers.

Wardens investigating the disappearance of Brown and Johnson were able to find and interview people who stated that they saw the wardens enter the area of the supposed poaching. After the wardens entered, witnesses stated they heard several shots in rapid succession. The failure of the wardens to arrive back at the location of their meeting on November 18, coupled with the witnesses' statements of hearing several shots, bolstered Parsons belief that the wardens were shot and killed by poachers.

The six teams that Parsons placed at the dam searched daily for Johnson and Brown. They did not find the bodies, and they never saw any poachers.

After the spring thaw, on May 2, 1923, wardens were patrolling the

area of Big Bog Dam and were advised by witnesses that they thought they'd observed a body stuck in the spillway of the dam. Wardens investigated the reported sighting and found the body of Mertley Johnson. Johnson was transported to Moosehead Lake and later to state medical examiners. A May 4, 1923, article in the Biddeford Journal stated: "Commissioner Parsons advised that it [the body] was in an excellent state of preservation. No comment was made on the cause of death."

The very next day, another report was forwarded to wardens from someone who thought they'd seen a body on the west branch of the Kennebec River. Wardens responded and found the body of David Brown, approximately one mile below the Big Bog Dam location where Johnson's body was found. The initial examination of both bodies did not disclose any sign of bullet wounds.

Both wardens' bodies were transported to the Somerset County Medical Examiner's O ice, where Drs. Sawyer and Stinchfield conducted their exams. A May 5, 1923, article in the Boston Daily Globe stated: "It seems likely that both wardens were drowned in Aboconet Bog last November when proceeding north to the Canadian Boundary country to search for Canadian beaver poachers. The bodies will be brought to Greenville tomorrow for burial."

A joint decision made by two medical examiners determined that both wardens died from drowning. This decision caught many of their peers completely o guard. Brown was one of the most cautious and experienced lawmen in Maine and knew the dangers of icy water; the idea that he'd died by falling into the river or lake had few believers.

No poachers were ever found or prosecuted in relation to this incident.

Summary

The wording in the quotation above is very telling. "It seems likely": these aren't the most a irming words a physician can use to describe the cause of death of two seasoned wardens. I read articles that specifically stated that these two men were very safety conscious and would never walk on thin ice; they would not risk themselves unnecessarily. There are many questions that have never been answered in relationship to the death of these two fine lawmen.

What did Johnson and Brown confront when they went into the woods that caused them to fire their weapons in rapid succession? If

they were alive immediately after that event, why wouldn't they have asked for more assistance and called for backup? I can almost guarantee that if lawmen had confronted something that caused both to fire in rapid succession, they would've left, reported the incident, and asked for assistance.

Both bodies were found within a mile and almost inside of twenty-four hours of each other. Whatever happened to each man probably happened simultaneously. I believe that it's telling that eighteen wardens entered the Big Bog area looking for poachers and for six months nothing was found and nothing was seen. Why didn't the wardens find the bodies of Johnson and Brown while they were in that specific area looking for the bodies and for poachers? While it's possible that both bodies were preserved because of the freezing river conditions, it doesn't seem probable that others wouldn't find the bodies until May, considering the number of wardens blanketing the area; they at least would've found the canoe they were supposedly in. This case mimics many others in this book. Searchers are in the area where people disappear yet cannot find the victim. Months, days, or hours after the incident, the victim is found in the exact area where they'd originally disappeared.

All of the articles specifically stated how fearsome Brown and Johnson were and they were known for their professionalism. The articles also stated that these two men were handpicked for their knowledge and their abilities. I don't believe that Johnson and Brown died accidentally. Something happened in the woods to both of these fine men. The shooting of bullets in rapid succession is proof that these two wardens confronted a very dangerous predator and lost. There were never any statements about the condition of their firearms or the number of bullets they were found carrying.

I believe another factor needs to be considered: the missing beavers. Who or what was taking the beavers? It's hard to imagine that eighteen wardens in a small, confined area cannot catch a predator taking beavers. The area where the wardens disappeared is very desolate during the winter months. I believe there is probably some link between the missing beavers and the wardens' deaths, and the predator may be one and the same.

Mitchell Kauftnan

Missing: 11/05/30, Jackman, ME

Age at disappearance: 37 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

When I first started to research this story, I was riveted because of the relationship it had to a specific type of tennis shoe I wore when I was a young boy.

The Converse Rubber Company was headquartered in Malden, Massachusetts. In 1917 they introduced the Converse canvas All- Star tennis shoe. It was one of the first basketball shoes introduced anywhere in the world. Charles “Chuck” Taylor joined the Converse sales team in 1921, and the shoes caught fire. They were a huge hit. I was one of those young basketball players that wore the black high tops for many years before Nike and Adidas stepped into the world.

In 1929 Converse had fallen onto tough times and filed for bankruptcy. The company made Mitchell B. Kauftnan the president. He had been the president of Hodgman Rubber Company since 1925. By all indications, Mitchell was a good leader who enjoyed the outdoors. In November 1930, Kaufinan and four friends from the Boston area made the journey to northwestern Maine to go deer hunting. They had arranged with two guides, Levi Kennedy and Neil Rancourt, to meet at their hunting camp adjacent to Crocker Pond just north of Jackman.

The guys settled into their cabins and were having fun. On November 4, they were playing cards in their cabin, and the guides were trying to get them into the woods for deer hunting. It was ex-tremely cold that day, and the men decided they would rather play cards and enjoy the camaraderie than go into the blistering cold.

On November 5, it was still very cold, but Neil Rancourt had talked Mitchell into going into the woods with him to scout for deer. All reports indicated that Mitchell was carrying a compass and matches. I found two di erent stories about what transpired at this point. One version says that the men took a small boat across Crocker Pond, split up, and went to look for deer. They were to meet up later, and Mitchell never came back. The second version says that Neil and Mitchell were together, and somehow, they got separated. Mitchell never came back, and a search started. In both versions, Mitchell didn’t come back, and a search started almost immediately.

Early in the morning of November 6, a search began. Mitchell’s friends at the cabin included Ben Munch, Leonard Troub, Francis Stein, and Meyer Odov. The other guide, who was also at the cabin, was Levi Kennedy. The six men split up and went into the woods, yelling for

Mitchell. They also went into Jackman and notified the local sheri that they needed assistance finding a lost hunter. That first day they did find some tracks in the snow but were not certain if they were Mitchell's.

On the second day of the search, they were confronted with freezing rain that made tracking and being in the outdoors miserable and di icult. As the day went by, the searchers were focusing in an area west of the camp. A November 12, 1930, article in the Winnipeg Free Press had the following: "Darkness tonight cut short the seventh day of the search for Mitchell B. Kaufman, Massachusetts manufacturer, lost somewhere in the vast wilderness surrounding Crocker Lake, near here since Wednesday."

Think carefully about this. The team had two experienced guides with them, guides that knew how to track and knew that area intimately. The group must've found some convincing evidence that Mitchell had tracked directly west of camp.

The word of Mitchell's disappearance made it back to Converse's headquarters in Malden. Friends and family started to organize, and political pressure was placed on Maine o icials to do everything possible to find the leader of Converse.

Searchers knew Mitchell was wearing a type of rubber boots. They knew what they were looking for. Guides believed that Mitchell could live for quite a while on small game in the area and fresh water and ponds just about everywhere. A November 12, 1930, article in the Lewiston Daily Sun had this: "Yet they could not account for their failure to locate the missing man. Large bonfires have blazed from high slopes, signal shots have been fired at numerous intervals, and men and dogs have crisscrossed the wilderness terrain hour after hour in the most intensive manhunt known to the region."

It became clear to the searchers that something unusual had happened to Mitchell. All of the highest surrounding mountains in the region had big fires burning on them at night. Teams had brought in the best-trained bloodhounds to track a scent, and still they did not have a lead on where Mitchell might be. The sheri for the Jackman area of Maine was Elton Markham. He was a grizzled outdoorsman that knew the wilderness well. He had more resources at his disposal than he had ever seen on a search in his career. He realized that there was the possibility that Mitchell had traveled outside their confined search area and decided to expand it. Company representatives and family members had sent an amphibious plane and two other search planes

to Jackman to further assist in the search; the aircraft flew constantly.

On November 15, Sheri Markham got the Canadians involved m the search for Mitchell and temporarily dropped all cross-border immigration requirements for Canadians and Americans. Four hundred Canadians responded to a request for assistance and were formed into a skirmish line arms' distance apart to completely cover hundreds of acres at a time. Representatives from Converse had publicly stated that all organized searchers who registered would be paid three to five dollars a day to search. A November 15, 1930, article in the Lewiston Daily Sun had this post about tracks and canines: "Sheri Elton Markham, in charge of the manhunt, said today that despite reports emanating from the camp that Kaufman's tracks had been found some eight miles to the north, Bloodhounds had followed his trail but a quarter of a mile. This was in the vicinity of an old tote road where Kaufman was last seen 10 days ago. Markham said the dogs or searchers thus far had failed to discover evidence that Kaufman had progressed more than a mile from the road."

This is a fascinating statement. Searchers had traveled miles west of the camp in the belief that he had gone directly toward the Canadian border. Teams were now looking at going north until, according to the sheri , bloodhounds couldn't find a scent and tracks were discounted. I'm someone that believes in the dogs' noses, as I worked around them when I was a police o icer. Dogs love to search and love to work. If the dogs don't find a scent and look lost, there is a reason.

There was a constant ongoing search for Mitchell for nearly three weeks. Searchers first went to far western Maine and focused on the region near the border with Canada, and now they appeared to be utterly lost.

After three weeks of nonstop searching, Mitchell's friends had returned to the Boston area. The press had made some intimation that they were avoiding being questioned by the sheri , which was entirely not true. The men had to get on with their lives and families.

On December 12, Sheri Markham had contacted Mitchell's friends and asked them to come back to Jackman to be questioned about the disappearance. All four men came back to Maine and went through rigorous questioning. The guides, Kennedy and Rancourt, were also questioned at length.

In mid-December a private investigator entered the picture. There were news headlines that an arrest was imminent, and the implication

was that a crime had occurred. This ran through news-papers for about a week. After national publicity about an arrest, Sheri Markham came out and said that no arrest was happening, and the allegations slowly went away.

There were a couple of searches that happened over the following months, but nothing significant happened until May 1931. Mitchell was a bachelor with strong family ties. His brother-in-law, Albert Wechsler, was designated by the family to be in charge of all searches. Albert was conscientious and diligent. In mid-May 1931 he hired a series of local guides and woodsman to cover an area on the outer perimeter of what had already been searched. They were specifically covering a region far outside the original search zone. A May 19, 1931, article in the Fitchburg Sentinel explained what was found: “Sheri Markham said today that Jack Murtha, guide, sent him word the body was located nine miles from Crocker Pond Camps in Jackman, from which Kaufman party set out on the day of his disappearance.” Mitchell Kauftnan had been found. The following appeared in the same article: “The body was reported to be found near St. Theophile Quebec.” The next day in the same paper: “The body that was located Monday on a pile of brush was brought here by a party of guides headed by Albert Wechsler, brother-in-law of Kaufman.” The article stated that the body was found in Canada, and an inquest and autopsy were completed there. The cause of death was listed as privation and exposure.

I am still at a loss to explain how Kaufman made it from Crocker Ponds Camp to Saint Cherefield Forest near Saint Theophile, Quebec. I looked at several maps of this region and count the miles from the pond to the camp at between sixteen and twenty miles. Reports indicate the distance was nine miles to the body. If either report were accurate, someone would have had to cover a phenomenal distance in the weather conditions and snow that were present.

Mitchell Kaufman was a very, very smart man. Everyone reported he was carrying matches and a compass. He knew that by traveling north he was going into colder weather. He also knew that a major roadway was just to his east. Why didn’t he use the compass? He was also carrying matches. Yes, it was wet, and it may have been di icult to start a fire, maybe. People routinely in the outdoors know what types of moss can bum even in very wet weather.

Articles state that Mitchell was found lying on a pile of brush. They never found his rifle, and they never made any mention of the condition of his clothing or boots. To be found lying on a pile of brush

is a bit unusual. Most people are found lying under a tree or on the ground.

Early on in the search, search authorities felt that Mitchell had gone west. It was later thought that he went north. They brought bloodhounds to the scene, and they couldn't pick up his scent going far north: why? Readers of my past books know that this is one of the key points in the vast majority of stories I write about. Canines' inability to track the victim is something normal in these instances. It was also early in the search that large fires were started on the high hills of the communities in the area. Mitchell would've known that he could find safety at the fires. He never went to one.

The only mention of Kaufman's body by o icials was that there was no sign of violence to the body, and he had one arm across his breast and the other at his side. I am surprised that bears had not ravaged the body. Maine has a very large number of black bears that come out of hibernation very hungry. The fact they did not take advantage of Kaufman's body for a meal seems a bit unusual.

The last item of significance in relation to this incident occurred on June 17, 1932. The private investigator working the disappearance filed two $20,000 lawsuits stating that he deserved a reward for finding Kaufman's body. It was never stated who he was litigating against or the outcome of the suit.

The final total of people and machinery that had searched for Mitchell Kaufman and failed: eight hundred searchers, three airplanes, seven di erent dog teams, numerous fires built on hillsides, dozens of wardens and resource o icers, and four guides.

Articles at the time stated that this was the largest search that this region of Maine had ever experienced. /

Dana Drake

Missing: 11/24/38, South Livermore, ME

Age at disappearance: 52 years

Point of Separation« Weather« Disability/Illness

Everyone who lives in a rural community knows someone like Dana Drake: an older, single man who loves the outdoors, keeps to himself, and maintains expert knowledge of the country, the animals, and the geography.

South Livermore, Maine, is a rural community adjacent to the Androscoggin River. It is approximately fifty miles north of Portland in an area of swamps, bogs, and wildlife. On November 24, 1938, Dana was a bachelor who did a variety of tasks to make enough money to live. He did own a few cows that he milked and sold the product to locals. He was also known as an expert trapper and hunter. At 11:30 a.m., Dana was hunting with a young neighbor, sixteen-year-old Frank Beckler. The pair hadn't seen anything viable to shoot, and Frank had told Dana that he promised to be home by noon for Thanksgiving dinner. Frank and Dana separated, and this was the last time Dana was ever seen.

On November 24, a neighbor came by Dana's house to get his milk and found that the cows had not been milked. At 10:00 a.m., Elmer Gordon searched Dana's property, knocked on his door, and found it locked with nobody home. Elmer went to the closest neighbor, Howard Thing, and he knew that Dana had been hunting yesterday. The pair went to Frank's house and determined where Dana was last seen; that is where the search started.

Just as the search was starting, a blizzard hit the area of South Livermore and slowed everyone's e orts. People in the community knew Dana from a distance. He had a bad hernia that made him shuffle. He couldn't run and was barely able to move about.

Local Maine wardens blew up local beaver dams in a belief that he may have fallen into the water. They found nothing. The sheri 's o ice in Auburn committed significant resources to locating Dana, and volunteers from surrounding communities came to South Livermore to assist. In an e ort to stimulate everyone to search, county commissioners posted a one-hundred-dollar reward for finding Dana, dead or alive, before December 12.

Everyone in the community believed that the search for Dana would be short, and he'd be fine. Nobody believed that the man that had the most knowledge of the area of anyone would die in a blizzard and not get back to his residence. A December 20, 1938, article in the Lewiston Daily had this about the progression of the search: "Ten townsmen, directed by Deputy Sheri Harry Rowe of Sheri Bridge's sta , pressed the fourth week of the hunt into North Livermore in the thickly wooded area west of Norlands. The section, fruitlessly combed, is approximately four miles from Drake's camp home." Yes, the search went on for weeks with nothing being found.

While the search was continuing, the sheri was calmly conducting a

criminal investigation into the possibility of foul play. The team had interviewed dozens of people without coming across anything suspicious. The only unusual thing that the investigation turned up was the fact that various items belonging to Dana had been found at his home that hadn't been there previously. It was almost as though someone stole items knowing he wasn't there, got a guilty conscience, and returned them. The area where Dana disappeared had many bogs, swamps, and slow-rolling hills. The four-week search for the outdoorsman was called the biggest search up to this time in the history of Maine. Searchers did not find one track, one piece of clothing, a rifle or anything belonging to Dana. Nobody in the surrounding area heard any rounds fired that day, and there was no dead deer found.

When someone in a tight-knit community goes missing and the locals turn out to search, it's an indication that man was loved. Over one hundred locals searched the area for over ten months, o and on, looking for Dana. The community was frustrated that they didn't find the body and get closure.

I think that this case epitomizes the oddity in not finding Dana. It also says that if Dana can disappear and never be found, this can happen to anyone. If the one person in the region that knew the area better than anyone, someone who trapped and hunted the region extensively, can vanish without a trace, anyone can.

Another similar incident played out in Mount Rainier National Park. Seventy-year-old Karen Sykes was a very famous outdoor writer in Seattle. She was considered an expert on the trails surrounding Mount Rainier and regularly traveled the area. On June 18,2014, she was hiking with her boyfriend when they stopped on a trail because of snow. She told him that she'd just walk up the trail a bit and be right back. He never saw her again. She was reported missing that night.

A multiday search found Karen in a very unusual location. A June 21, 2014, article in the Hu ington Post blog explained the de-tails of what rangers found, per Patti Wold, a US National Parks spokeswoman: "She said that the body of a deceased female was found o trail near Boundary Creek in a rough, steep terrain—an area di icult to access and not commonly traveled." It was spotted by a helicopter. Bloodhounds had not tracked her scent.

Karen was found over a large ridge from where she'd vanished. Thinking that Karen got lost and indiscriminately wandered there is ridiculous. Nobody believes that she voluntarily hiked and died there.

I am telling you these two specific stories to bang it into your head that it doesn't matter how experienced, smart, and educated you are: this can happen to anyone.

Raymond Dolliver

Missing: 11/18/50, Aurora, ME

Age at disappearance: 17 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Previously Searched

In November 1950, Raymond Dolliver was a junior at Pemetic High School. The school and his residence were located in Manset Maine just south of Bar Harbor. The dominating force in this area is Acadia National Park. If you have never been to this region of the United States, you need to go. The coastline in this area is absolutely gorgeous. Bar Harbor is a unique seaside city that beckons you to walk it once you arrive.

On November 18,1950, Raymond and his three high-school friends traveled thirty miles north of their homes to Aurora to go deer hunting. This region was known as being very wild and had a good name considering its notoriety: the "Black Area." It was considered very boggy in the area of the Leed Mountains. A November 23,1950, article in the Bar Harbor Times explained what happened to the group: "Dolliver became separated from his hunting companions, Carlton Hill, Ronald Cockroft and Henry Norwood Saturday when they parted to hunt deer." The catalyst for the group separating was never made clear.

The rest of the group arrived back at their cars at the end of the day, but Raymond Dolliver didn't come back. The boys notified local law enforcement that in turn contacted the Maine Warden Service.

The local community, and even the wealthy, got involved in the search to find Raymond. John Rockefeller had an estate in Seal Harbor and committed two hundred fifty of his employees to the e ort to find Raymond. Wardens from throughout Maine were redirected to the SAR. The search went on for almost a month, formally and informally.

The search was greatly compromised for the first six days. The wardens stated that November 24 was the first full day they could search on the ground because of freezing rain and snow.

After the first month of searching, the community felt defeated, and

many were depressed. Raymond's mother went through bouts of depression, especially around the Thanksgiving holidays, spent without her boy.

Over the next year, there were two additional searches to find Raymond's body. All of these search e orts failed to find anything.

On November 27,1951, a local man, Roland Terrill, was searching with others and came across one of Raymond's boots. It was found one half mile from Seven Mile Brook. A November 27, 1951, article in the Lewiston Daily had this statement about what was found next: "Terrill was also credited with finding the boy's body in the search today by 11 game wardens and the Bangor man. Posse members took 15-foot intervals and swept the suspected area twice without result. On the third sweep, Terrill made the find in the tangle of underbrush fast being blanketed by snow that mounted to five inch depth." Later in the article was this: "The body lay half a mile from where Terrill found the boot. Posse men were unable to find Dolliver's other boot, rifle or cap. The scene was in such di icult terrain that Morse hiked out of the woods and obtained permission from County Attorney W. Atherton Fuller Jr. to bring the body out of the woods rather than ask the medical examiner to go in to examine it."

This is a lot to absorb. Let's start with the first important point. Raymond's body wasn't found after five di erent search e orts. It was missed multiple times in 1951. It was found in an area that had been searched multiple times, a key profile point. Raymond was found without his boots. They were able to find one boot: where was the other? The last thing you want to lose on a cold winter day are your boots. Many of the cases I have chronicled in past books concern victims who've lost their shoes or boots. The other item you would not want to lose in cold weather is your cap. How did he lose these items? Raymond was found in what was described by wardens as extremely rugged area. It was so rugged they didn't want to bring the medical examiner in. How did Raymond get into that area? If he voluntarily entered that region, he had to have known he was in an area that was foreign to him, and you'd think that if he could, he would've turned and exited.

The headline for the article I quoted in the previous paragraph was "Boy Hunter's Body Found after a Year, Death Cause a Puzzle." The following quote is from the first page of this article: "Medical Examiner Charles Knowlton of Ellsworth said it was impossible to determine by examination the cause of death." This is another key point to cases I present. In many of the cases, the medical examiner

cannot determine what killed the victim. It is a bit discomforting that the body was described in detail, but not the scene where Raymond was found.

This is a classic case that represents many of the profile points established in my five other books.

I feel for Carlton Hill, Ronald Cockroft, and Henry Norwood, Raymond's hunting partners. I am sure that they lived with the grief and guilt of being able to walk out of the woods alive and having to leave Raymond behind. The Dollivers, Raymond's friends, and his hunting buddies have my prayers.

Evo Recchia

Missing: 11/20/50, Mount Bigelow, ME

Age at disappearance: 23 years

Point of Separation* Weather

In November 1950, the Maine Warden Service was extremely busy and strapped for personnel. You just finished reading the story of Raymond Dolliver. Two days after Raymond disappeared, Evo Recchia also vanished, doing the exact same thing Raymond was doing: hunting.

In mid-November 1950, Evo Recchia and his good friend Peter Rometti, thirty-four years old, left their homes in Franklin, Massachusetts, and headed for deer hunting in Maine. They arrived in the area of Mount Bigelow in the eastern portion of the state, approximately one hundred miles northwest of the location where Raymond disappeared.

On November 20, Evo and Peter went into the mountains to hunt. A November 24 article in the Lewiston Evening Journal explained what happened: "Evo Recchia, 23 of Franklin, Mass, strayed from a hunting companion." I cannot count the number of times I have written "strayed from,"

"got separated from," "somehow were separated."

Peter looked for Evo, could not locate him, and reported him to local authorities as a missing person. The Maine Warden Service had their hands full with how to allocate resources between the search for Raymond and the e ort to locate Evo. They assigned twenty men to

the search for Evo, six wardens and two airplanes. They covered six square miles, a massive area considered part of the Appalachian chain; this search was occurring in Franklin County.

An odd coincidence in this disappearance: the Appalachian Trail traverses Mount Bigelow. People who have read my past books will quickly remember that I've written about many people who have vanished on the trail. Add another one to the victims list. Another strange coincidence: the names of the county Evo was lost in and the city where he and Peter were from: Franklin. West Peak on Mount Bigelow is the highest points in the area at 4,145 feet.

During the formal search for Evo, the rain and snow inhibited much of the ground and air e ort to locate the young man. Many articles addressed the weather issue. In late November, the formal search for Evo was terminated.

Evo's disappearance didn't gamer one-tenth of the publicity that Dolliver's did. The reason for the lack of publicity in this incident is probably due to the remote area Evo vanished and the fact that Raymond disappeared in close proximity to where he lived. It was a hometown story. I want readers to think about how odd it is that two young men disappear in a rural environment just one hundred miles apart from each other. Evo was never found and Raymond was located over a year after he vanished.

It is unusual not to find missing people. Do not get numb to these stories and disappearances. I place them here because they are very abnormal incidents. I've had people in the past say that the books get boring because all of the stories happen to read like exact duplicates of each other. If I never presented the facts, people would never believe that the facts are as they are. It sometimes takes overwhelming people with facts before something unusual can be ac-knowledged. These disappearances and separations are not normal.

Ludger Belanger

Missing: 11/25/75, Somerville, ME

Age at disappearance: 25 years

By every account I've ever read, Ludger Belanger was a great family man who was hard working and kept his nose free of trouble. It appears that trouble found him.

This incident happened o Highway 105 in northern Somerville, Maine.

On November 25, 1975, Ludger's brother and wife dropped him o on the side of the highway where he wanted to go for deer hunting. They had a scheduled time to meet him later. Ludger never came back. It was stated that Ludger was carrying a 30-30 rifle and was an extremely capable hunter and woodsman.

After he went missing, the Maine Warden Service committed significant resources to the search. Ludger's family and friends volunteered to assist in the e ort to find the man. In the beginning everyone felt that Ludger must be lost. To the people who knew him, this did not make any sense. The wardens interviewed neighbors, friends, and anyone in the vicinity of the disappearance. Nobody said anything negative about the man, and none o ered any clues as to what may have happened.

After two weeks of intensive searches, the e ort to locate Ludger was terminated. There were other e orts over the following years. Nothing was ever found.

As is the case in the vast majority of these cases where the victim is not located, police started talking foul play. The Maine State Police took over the case and made statements that they had no evidence that Ludger was alive. They also had no evidence he was dead. They claimed that it appeared to them that Ludger had killed a deer, pulled it to the road, and apparently gotten a ride. It was never explained how they'd developed these clues or why it hadn't been stated at the beginning of the search e ort. If they knew he left the area, then why spend the resources for a two-week e ort to stay in the area?

Maine police put divers into every lake and pond in the region. They found nothing. A November 27, 1976, article in the Kennebec Journal had this statement from Captain Jerald Boutilier of the state police: "We've carried out foot searches, airplane searches, even checked out every abandoned well. I don't know whether the odds are against us." The statement expresses the frustration of the police.

In 1976 and the years following, police made statements that if they found a body, they might be able to file charges. They never named a suspect or the motive. A better question is, how was Ludger taken down when he was armed? Later in the same article quoted above: "According to Boutilier, State Police gave little weight to the possibility that Ludger was still alive." This is an important statement. The captain didn't state it was impossible Ludger was alive. If they knew they had enough evidence to file charges on someone, then they knew for a fact Ludger was dead. The captain hedged his statement,

and that was revealing.

You couldn't count the number of times that searches have been made in the Somerville area in the years after Ludger disappeared. I do not know whether Ludger is alive or dead. All indications from his behavior indicate he loved his family and friends, and there are no indicators he would voluntarily disappear. After researching hundreds and hundreds of cases, I realize that almost anything is possible.

After more than forty years, this case must be sitting in a dusty case file without any investigator giving it another look.

Fortunato Rivera

Missing: 11/13/93, 10:00 a.m., Corinth, ME

Age at disappearance: 79 years

Water» Disability/ Illness» Boulders» Missing Clothing/ Boots

This incident happened just thirty miles west of the location where Raymond Dolliver disappeared. It's important to keep these locations clear in your mind as they eventually may lead to a geographical cluster.

Fortunato Rivera was born and raised in the Philippines. I don't remember in my time investigating missing people ever doing research on someone from that part of the world. He eventually established residency in New Jersey.

In early November 1993, Fortunato traveled with his son and grandson from New Jersey to his son's hunting camp outside of Corinth, Maine, near Hunt Lake. At 6:00 a.m. on November 13, Fortunato walked with his son and grandson to his hunting stand, where the son ensured his father was correctly settled. The son came back to check on his dad at ten in the morning, and he was gone. This was puzzling to the son because he told his dad that he'd meet him back there in four hours. The son and grandson searched the area, screamed the man's name, and then called the local sheri and Maine Warden Service.

Wardens and volunteer search groups made an extensive search of the area on Sunday and found nothing. The searchers had to be puzzled by this, asking themselves how far a seventy-nine-year-old man could walk. A November 17 article in the Daily Gazette had an explanation of what was found on Monday: "Members of a volunteer search team

found Rivera's body face up in shallow water 20 feet from shore in an old reservoir o route 10." The article also stated: "Rivera had removed his shirt and boots." Without an education in drowning and hypothermia, none of this may make sense, and it doesn't. In my last book, Missing 411: A Sobering Coincidence, I gave a detailed explanation about drowning and the positions one should expect males and females to be found in when deceased in the water. Males should be found face down in the water. It is extremely rare to find a male faceup in the water, as Fortunato was found. This is highly rare and indicates something unusual.

It was November in Maine, with cold weather. The article stated the following about Fortunato's trip from the deer stand to the reservoir: "Rivera had trudged through rocky terrain on West Mountain to reach the reservoir." Why would a seventy-nine-year-old man, not familiar with the area, take a strenuous hike up a mountain? Later in the same article was this: "A forest ranger said Rivera walked about two miles, crossing a mountainside dotted with boulders and rock ledges." Now the story even gets better. The implication that forest rangers are making is that a man left his stand even though he told his son he'd stay there. He then took a di icult hike up a mountain and found an old lake. The coroner, Russell Peacock, stated that Fortunato got hot from his hike and wanted to cool o by taking o his shirt and boots. Remember, it's November in Maine, and many of these ponds are frozen over.

In my last book, 1 wrote about several instances very similar to Fortunato's. In one instance the young man was found deceased in a large pond, wearing white socks. Law enforcement keyed on the socks and said that the man did not walk into the pond because the socks were clean and the area around the pond was muddy. They were perplexed about how he'd managed to get into the pond and die. There are many, many cases like this in the book.

Why would Fortunato come down o the stand? He didn't go back toward his son. He supposedly took o in a completely di erent direction up a mountain.

The coroner stated that Fortunato died from a heart attack, not hypothermia and not drowning. The medical examiner stated that it was probable that Fortunato died Saturday. Fortunato's son checked on his dad at 10:00 a.m., and he was not in the stand. The son and grandson searched the area, called out for the man, and never heard anything. It was never stated that the son climbed the mountain to get to the reservoir, probably because the son never would believe

Fortunato would make the trip. After writing about hundreds of other cases very similar to this, I have serious doubts that a seventy- nine-year-old man would make the supposed journey, take o his boots and shirt, and take a swim in an extremely cold reservoir before the sun had gotten high in the sky. He had to have been well out of the area at 10:00 a.m. when his son checked on him because he never responded. One last thought: Rangers stated that they found Fortunato's body twenty feet from shore. That is quite a distance to find a body when someone was supposedly just cooling o . It would seem normal to find the body much closer to the shoreline.

It has not been lost on me that Fortunato disappeared just thirty miles from the Dolliver incident. Do you believe in coincidence?

Robert Smith

Missing: 11/18/97, Garfield Plantation, ME

Age at disappearance: 70 years

Disability/ Illness* Weather* Canines

Northern Maine has always had intrigue associated with it in my books. As you've already read about the wardens who disappeared, there have been many others in past books.

This story centers on Garfield Plantation, just south of Portage Lake, adjacent to the Machias River. This spot is approximately sixty-five miles east of the Canadian border.

Robert Smith was a seventy-year-old experienced hunter and retired farmer who was recovering from cancer. He had fought it and beat it. He was on the mend, and the physicians gave him the clearance to go back to hunting. Robert and his three brother-in-laws and his wife traveled to Robert's hunting camp just on the outskirts of Garfield. On November 18, 1997, Robert's wife accompanied him to his deer stand, and the three brother-in-laws went to their stands in the area. The Smiths didn't shoot a deer, and at 2:30 p.m., Robert told his wife that he was going to walk in a circle around the area to see if anything was in the area. He came down from the stand, and his wife saw him walking away carrying his rifle and wearing his bright orange hunters vest.

As darkness started to hit the area, Mrs. Smith left the stand and started to look for Robert. She eventually made it back to camp and met her brothers. They searched the area and could not find the

hunter. It was at this point that the group called the local police at 5:30 p.m. The Maine Warden Service was brought in to run the search operation.

The warden service has done many searches over the years and are considered the expert agency for SAR in this part of the world. They didn't let the Smith family down. During a nine-day search, they covered eighteen thousand acres and committed two hundred fifty wardens; helicopters and planes constantly flew the area when weather permitted, and the National Guard assisted. I did find a note that shocked me about who also assisted in the search. It was stated that Canadian SAR teams came into the United States to assist, along with multiple canine teams from throughout the north.

I wrote extensively about a woman hiking the Appalachian Trail who was found later deceased on the property of the Naval Evasion School. That Naval Evasion School committed twenty people to search for Robert. I've never seen them assisting in anything since.

Commanders did say that fog and snow hit the search area multiple times and slowed the e ort to locate Robert. After nine intensive search days, the e ort failed to find the hunter.

A November 24, 1997, article in the Bangor Daily News had this statement by Lieutenant Pat Dorian from the Maine Warden Service about their failure to find Robert: "The veteran game warden from Greenville has been coordinating searches since 1985, 'It has us totally ba led,' Dorian said on Saturday." Later in the same article: "Throughout the search, no clues have been found that would give any indication of where Smith could have wandered. 'It's just unbelievable,' Dorian said." Another article on November 18 in the Bangor Daily News contained more of Dorian's thoughts: "Could he have kept on walking, right out of the search area? Dorian doubts that, considering Smith's physical condition and the fact he generally couldn't walk more than a mile without having to stop and catch his breath."

One year after Robert Smith vanished, fellow hunters, family, and friends went back and did another extensive search. They found nothing.

In total, multiple searches, hundreds of searchers, multiple canine teams, and two planes and two helicopters covering more than eighteen thousand acres found only one boot print near a beaver dam. Authorities blew up the dam and drained the entire area but found

nothing.

Late in the search e ort, it was disclosed that Mrs. Smith had heard one gunshot as she was walking back to the hunting camp. A hunter who is in trouble will fire multiple rounds. She heard just one. This was hunting season; hearing gunshots isn't out of the realm of normal. Maybe it was Robert, and maybe he had a shot on a caribou.

Knowing that Robert couldn't have walked a long distance and knowing this was property that he owned and spent hundreds of hours on during the years, it's irrational to think he got lost and died. Whatever scenario you imagine, you must account for the fact that a heroic e ort failed to find Robert's body. This is not normal for a man that was severely restricted in his ability to move through the area. Why couldn't people see the bright orange vest he was wearing? If he was injured, why didn't he fire his rifle? Why didn't bloodhounds pick up his scent somewhere on the property?

This is a very unusual case with facts that don't make sense. If Robert had been hunting with friends and not family members, maybe the two words "foul play" would enter the picture. This happened on his private hunting grounds.

As I have stated many times, the reality of not locating the body, not knowing what happened to your loved one, and not getting closure on the disappearance of the most special person in your life is the worst possible outcome.

Michigan

Name Date Missing« Age« Sex

Ray Naugle 11/01/1902-p.m.«28«M

Harry Brownell 11/09/09« 23«M

Arthur Lepusha 11/14/09« Unk« M

Robert Beilby 11/16/09« 65«M

August Kleist 11/04/28«42«M

Paul McDowell 11/14/31« 22«M

Raymond Maki 11/27/36« 17«M

Edward Woelfle (WI) 10/06/46« 15«M

F. Hale Currier 10/17/48« 53«M

Robert Lapine 11/19/48, 2:00 p.m.« 16«M

Walter Kline 11/15/55,7:00 a.m.« 52«M

Larry Wyco 11/25/77, noon« 15«M

Oscar Hintta 11/16/88, 4:30 p.m.«65«M

This is one of the chapters in the book where you will take time to pause, reread sections, and be dismayed at the clusters of missing that emerge. The fact that many of these hunters were never found is troubling. In the cases where victims were found, there are facts associated with their recovery that are equally disturbing.

In past books I have written about disappearances that are completely ba ling. In one incident a college student was cross-country skiing, and searchers believed he fell through ice and perished. The body was not found in the body of water. Fourteen months after the disappearance, the student suddenly appeared at his family's house across the United States with no memory of what had transpired. Refer to Missing 411: A Sobering Coincidence for de-tails.

In another odd case, a former professional athlete spent a holiday weekend with his family. He decided to go out on the river alone in his boat. He phoned his wife and reported being chased through the woods by a group of men. His cell phone was pinged, and it showed an erratic hopscotch e ect across areas of the region. The phone went dead. Days after he called, the body was located under highly unusual circumstances. The medical examiners had a di icult time determining the cause of death, and many believe the exact reason was never determined. The story is wrought with very unusual circumstances. Refer to Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail for details.

Michigan has had more than its share of people disappearing under odd circumstances

Ray Naugle

Missing: 11//01/1902- pm, 12 Miles NW of Newberry, MI

Age at disappearance: 28 years

Cluster Zone* Canines» Swamp» Point of Separation

The location of this case is twelve miles northwest of Newberry, Michigan. The piece of land that Newberry sits is just forty miles wide and is surrounded on two sides by water, Lake Superior to the north and Lake Michigan to the south. There are at least nine people missing in this region of the state that I have documented. You can also add a military jet that left Kinross Field that was never found (See Missing 411-LAW).

On October of 1902, Ray Naugle was a married man living in Ithaca New York and working as a clerk for the McCormack Store. Late in the month, Ray and his friends Nathaniel Johnson from Newark Township and George Mikesell of Pompeii decided to travel to Newberry Michigan for a hunting excursion. They set their camp twelve miles northwest of Newberry near Silver Creek.

On November 1, the friends decided to head into the woods and hunt. What happened on the guy's excursion is explained in the December 25, 1938 edition of the Detroit Free Press, "Naugle was accompanied by Nathaniel Johnson and George Mikesell. Johnson last saw Naugle as they parted to circle a swamp into which they had trailed a deer. They were to have met on the other side, but Naugle never appeared." Mikesell and Johnson called Ray's name, searched the perimeter and returned to camp thinking he possible headed that way. They arrived at their tents to see that nobody was there. The pair camped there that night and started the next morning to look for their friend. They searched the entire day and then decided to leave and get assistance from authorities.

Newberry o icials responded to the campsite and did a methodical search of the region. Hundreds of people and fellow hunters from the community converged on the area and spent days looking for Ray, and they found nothing. This November 21, 1912 article in the St. Joseph Daily Press had these details, "A Bloodhound procured for the purpose of tracking Naugle refused to work, the trail being too old to follow. It is hard to see how Naugle could not have found his way out had he not been shot. The factory whistles at Newberry can be heard at the hunting camp. While not a great distance away, stumps are being blasted at the farm at Lake Superior Iron and Chemical, and the noise of the explosions carries for miles. There were several lumber and hunting camps in the vicinity, and roads almost surround the territory. "The reporter and the dog handler do not know why the dog refused to work, the important point, I have documented this behavior in canines several times on cases that fit our profile. This November 19, 1912 article in the Escanaba Morning Press had a familiar tone to the previous newspaper statement, "An uncle, who came from St. Louis

Michigan to look for him, says it is a mystery how anyone could be permanently lost in that locality, and it is feared that there may be something more in the a air than simply getting lost." Both of these articles imply that the disappearance doesn't make sense. If this were the only case for a one-hundred-mile radius, I'd say it was a fluke, but it is not, there are many of these types of disappearances in this area.

The disappearance of Ray Naugle festered with the people of Northern Michigan for decades. There was an article about the case written in 1938 and another in 1977, each calling it a mystery and relaying the facts that he was never found.

I have consistently stated that these cases are related to water. In this incident, the campsite was near a swamp and quite close to Lake Superior. It's hard to understand how water plays a role in this, but it does. I encourage readers to get a copy of Missing 411- LAW and read the story about a United States Military jet that was scrambled from Kinross Air Base, (45 miles east of the Naugle campsite) about an unidentified flying object over Lake Superior and what eventually happened, it's intriguing.

Harry Brownell :o <

Missing: 11/09/1909, Newberry, MI '

Age at disappearance: 23 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

You will read about two several hunters that vanished in the vicinity of Newberry, Michigan. In past books, I have already established the region around Newberry as a geographical cluster of missing people, where three people vanished under established profiles.

Harry Brownell and his hunting companion, Jess (or John, depending on what you read) Crandall, left their homes in Saint Charles, Michigan, on November 6 and established their camp on the outskirts of Newberry on November 8. Both men were experienced woodsmen and hunters. Harry had been a seasoned train agent for the Michigan Central Railroad. It was considered a good job for someone who had a great social outlook on life.

On the morning of November 9, Harry and his friend started out from their camp and were walking an old logging road. Around midday, they came to a fork in the road, and one went each direction, with an agreement to meet back at camp by dusk. Jess arrived at camp. Harry

never made it. Jess went into Newberry the next morning and reported his friend as missing.

The Masonic lodge in Newberry was established as the search headquarters for Harry. From the beginning they had a huge response from their request for searchers.

A November 20, 1909, article in the Evening News had this information about obstacles in the search: “The snowstorm cut o what little hope was for a speedy recovery of Brownell, as the Bloodhounds brought here by Sheri Kettle of Antrim County were able to follow the scent in the four inches of snow that had fallen. The dogs had been doing good work having followed the trail of the missing man for several miles.”

I question this version of the story. As someone that has worked extensively with tracking canines, predominantly German shepherds, I know that a dog’s nose goes dry after a certain period of time, and they need to be replaced. If you were hot on someone’s trail, it would not matter to me if it got dark: I’d stay on the trail with a new handler and new dog. Did they have enough dogs? A November 16, 1909, article in the Evening News had this interesting infor-mation: “His father arrived on the scene yesterday and is personally conducting the search for the young man, which is being carried on by a party of between 20 and 30 men with Bloodhounds.” If there were that many dogs on the scene, I don’t see why the search was stopped. It is another case where the weather is blamed on inhibiting search operations.

A December 14,1909, article in the Evening News had this perspective:

The fate of hunter Harry Brownell, the St. Charles hunter who disappeared from his hunting camp near Newberry November 9, bids fair to remain an unsolved mystery. Although hundreds of men have scoured the woods for miles around, not the slightest trace of the missing man has been found. Had the Earth opened and swallowed him up? Brownell could not have been more completely and mysteriously disappeared.

There was no information on this disappearance until news agencies in June 1910 started carrying articles suggesting that Harry was in an insane asylum. Several articles stated that his dad went to northern Michigan and searched out various asylums looking for his son. He didn’t find him.

You have just read the second of several missing person cases in northern Michigan that happened, there were three in a seven-day period. When I was researching these incidents, I was stunned. I don't ever remember investigating a series of incidents that happened in such close proximity of time and space. Read on and pay close attention to locations, dates, times, and associated facts.

Arthur Lepusha (a.k.a. Antone Lepusha)

Missing: 11/14/1909, Mud Creek, MI

Age at disappearance: Unknown

Point of Separation* Weather* Previously Searched* Cluster Zone

One pattern that emerged in my last book was that of a number of men who disappeared and were someplace else before they were eventually found. Forensics has proven that the men disappeared somewhere and were later found in a creek, river, pond, and so on, but they weren't in the water for the entire time they were missing. It was only a series of very sharp medical examiners and police o icers that caught the subtleties and were able to put the pieces together. Nobody knows where these men were for several days before they were eventually found. As you read this story, something will show that maybe there is more to Arthur's story than what the press may imply.

This incident happened in almost the exact same location as the disappearance of Paul McDowell. Both disappeared in an area north of Ironwood and in close proximity of Lake Superior and the Wisconsin border.

Arthur Lepusha lived on the outskirts of Ironwood, in a town called Jessieville, Michigan. On November 14, 1909, he went out with two friends deer hunting in an area north of the city called Mud Creek. It is a very rural area with significant water and swamps.

Lepusha went to a hunting camp called Dominic Bonazzi's Camp at Mud Creek. Some of the dates about when he vanished vary between November 14 and 16. Either date is very relevant. A November 20 article in the Ironwood News stated that he went out searching for deer on Monday; he wounded a deer and searched for it and eventually got lost and came into camp very late. According to the same article, the following occurred on Tuesday: "The other members of the party went out as usual Tuesday morning, Lepusha saying that he intended to remain in camp. When - they returned, Lepusha was

gone." The group believed that he had gone home. It wasn't until Thursday that they realized he was missing. At this point authorities were notified and a search started.

A December 4, 1909, article in the Morning Press stated that Lepusha was last seen on a road a short distance from camp, tracking a deer that he'd wounded. When he didn't return that night, the camp fired o rounds to get his attention. Other campers in the area came to what they thought was a hunter in distress; it was the camp. Other camps made an extensive search of the area and were unable to find him. This same article states that the day after the disappearance, a blizzard hit this area, and it may have killed him.

An extensive ten-day search for miles in the region around where Lepusha vanished found nothing. The citizens of Jessieville got together seventy-five dollars for a reward, which did stir some interest.

There was no activity on the Lepusha disappearance until October 1911, nearly two years later. An October 18 article in the Evening News gave the details on what was found:

While in the woods about a mile and a half east of Tripletts farm in Ironwood Township, Gogebic County, last week, Harvey Hubbard came upon a rifle. Near it was a rubber boot, pieces of cloth and small pieces of bone. He carried the rifle home and sent it to town with his father who, recalling the disappearance of Antone Lepusha in the hunting season two years ago, and Dominic Bonazza who was camped with Lepusha when he disappeared, and Frank Petrusha from whom Lepusha borrowed the gun to examine it. Both declared it to be the rifle that Lepusha carried.

An October 21, 1911, article in the Ironwood Times had even more interesting details about the gun: "It is not nearly as badly rusted as one would think, after two years of exposure."

On page 349 in Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail, I have a table with an extensive list of cases I've written about where the victim was eventually found in an area previously searched. Many people have theorized that the victims must not have been in the location when it was searched or they would've been found. The Lepusha case is fascinating because of the statement about rust on the rifle. Rifles didn't have protective coatings to inhibit rust in 1909. Most rifles today do have rust inhibitors, depending on their finish. Many articles state that searchers had "scoured the country for miles at the time."

This means that they should've found Lepusha. One of my last comments comes directly from a thirty-year National Park Ranger that I interviewed from Crater Lake National Park. He told me at the time that the one consistent item you find at every death scene in the woods is boots. He explained that boots are heavy, and they are made of material that does not deteriorate easily. The fact that only one of Lepusha's boots is found is a bit troubling. I also believe they should've found his belt buckle as those items will never go away in our lifetime. Finding very few bones isn't that unusual. Finding no teeth, jawbone, or large bones of the body makes this case unique.

Robert Beilby

Missing: 11/16/1909, Sidnaw, MI

Age at disappearance: 65 years (also listed as 68 years) point of Separation* Weather* Cluster Zone This is the last of the three cases all happening within a seven-day period on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Addressing this in terms of geographical locations, Lepusha disappeared in the farthest possible northeast location. If you drew a straight line directly east 78 miles, you'd hit the spot where Beilby vanished. If you continued straight east again for 162 miles, you'd hit Newberry and the location of the disappearance of Brownell. It's extremely odd that three people vanish in a straight line from each other.

Robert Beilby was described as an expert woodsmen and longtime successful hunter that knew the camp and area around Sidnaw extremely well. He was from Downglac, in Cass County, Michigan.

An April 23, 1910, article in the Evening News explained what happened to Beilby: "Camp was established on St. Paul Road about midway between Channing and Sidnaw. One day Beilby and another member of camp started out. They had tracked a deer for some distance when the 'run' separated. The hunters parted company. Beilby disappeared over a ridge. This was the last seen of him."

Beilby's son was part of the hunting party. When his dad didn't return that night, a large search was organized that went on for ten days. The son was befuddled when his dad couldn't be found. During those ten days, it snowed heavily and searching was suspended.

In May 1910, another huge search was made for Beilby. Dozens searched the region for over a month and found nothing. There were three separate searches over the following months that produced

nothing of value. They dragged marshes, creeks, and small rivers, finding nothing.

After reading all of the stories in this chapter, you start to think that the Michigan's Upper Peninsula must be riddled with dead bodies. The majority of the men I describe in this chapter were never found. The ones that were found had stories about their recovery almost as unusual as their disappearance.

There was one paragraph in the News-Palladium of April 21, 1910, in reference to Beilby's disappearance that I think is a good way to end this entry: "The disappearance of Beilby is but one of many recorded tragedies of the north woods, the number of which is augmented every season and the horror of which is only lessened by familiarity."

August Kleist

Missing: November 14, 1928, Creighton, MI Age at disappearance: 42 years

Cluster Zone« Equipment Failure« Weather« Missing Clothing/ Shoes

You can now add another case to the cluster of missing people near Newberry Michigan. Creighton is a small town approximately thirty miles west of Newberry.

I have never written about the disappearance of an extremely wealthy man, but someone who is called a millionaire in the 1920s had real money. In November of 1928, 42-year-old August Kleist was the owner of a chain of movie theaters and the partial owner of a bus line in Pontiac Michigan. He was de-scribed in multiple articles as a millionaire businessman.

August was a married man who enjoyed the outdoors, specifically hunting. On about November 10, 1928, he was traveling from Florida to Elks hunting camp south of Creighton, Michigan. He had several vehicle issues that forced him to rent cars. He eventually took a train to Creighton where he exited and asked for directions to his camp. He left on foot to walk the 4-6 miles to camp, but he got lost. He returned to Creighton, spent the night, got di erent directions and took o again. Witnesses stated that he was dressed lightly for the season, but felt he could easily make the camp on foot in plenty of time. It was reported that his hunting camp was on the Manistique River.

Kleist's hunting buddies reported that he never arrived and a search was started. Over 150 searchers plodded through the swamps and frozen ground to look for the businessman. An attorney rep-resenting the Kleist family made a public announcement that they would pay $4 per day to search; they got over 150 people to step forward. There was a formal two-day SAR that found nothing. Articles at the time theorized that August fell into a river and was washed away, there was nothing to support this allegation, just a common discussion point for the local communities.

There were a handful of searchers that stayed looking for Kleist. On December 2, state trappers Peter Arsenault and Bert Furst were going deep into the swamp checking their traps and casually looking through the landscape and came across a bizarre sight. Four miles north of Elks hunting camp and two miles south of Creighton they saw a hand protruding through the snow. This December 3, 1928 edition

of the Detroit Free Press had details of the find, “Kleist is believed to have died on November 16, as snow fell the following day and, although the body was covered in snow, there was none beneath it. When he started for the Elks Hunting Camp, he wore low shoes, silk socks, and a light business suit. During his struggles through the underbrush, all of his clothing from the waist down was torn o , his hat was gone and to add to his su ering and apparent frenzy, he had run into a protruding limb of a tree which had torn out one of his eyes.” I have never read such a fictional account of a missing person as was presented here. I have never heard of clothing, shoes and underwear ripped o the body because you ran through the woods, ever. After you read the next entry in the same article, you’ll wonder how could he have ran if the description of the area was accurate, “The place where the body was found is four miles from state highway M-28, through a veritable jungle and practically impassable. So dense is the underbrush and the forest, 25 men worked in relays for four hours to carry the body to the highway.” We are now to believe that Kleist ran through the woods so fast that they tore his clothes, shoes, socks, and underwear o the body? How far could someone travel through brush this dense without footwear? The coroner decided that Kleist died of hypothermia, even though it wasn’t snowing when he supposedly died.

When you read these accounts, you have to apply a level of common sense. Kleist was walking to a hunting camp that had a road going to it. Why would anyone enter the dense brush when he knew he was supposed to be on a road? How fast would you have to be traveling to take out your entire eye on a branch? There was never any mention that searchers found Kleist’s shoes, socks or pants, and underwear. I can only imagine what the trappers thought when they stumbled onto this scene.

There was never mention of an investigation of this incident. I guess it’s possible that nobody wanted to look into this event because it was so far from a major city. When you look at the totality of cases from the region around Newberry and the Upper Michigan Peninsula, there is something profoundly strange happening in this area.

The critical factor to me in this event was the absence of footwear. Yes, it’s strange that he was missing his pants and underwear, but I have written many stories that footwear is not found on the victim. In the years since I started to disclose this finding in my books, I have had many readers comment to me about their thoughts. Some have stated that if you don’t have shoes on, you aren’t going to travel fast or far. Others have said that the one item we wear daily that has the

most bacteria is footwear.

Paul McDowell

Missing: 11/14/31, north of Ironwood, MI

Age at disappearance: 22 years

Water» Point of Separation* Weather

The location of this disappearance is at the extreme northwest corner of Michigan, directly on the Wisconsin border and adjacent to Lake Superior. It is an established geographical cluster of missing people who can be seen on the back cover of Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail. There were four people listed in this cluster before I started this book. This cluster will grow as this chapter expands.

Paul McDowell was from Muskegon Heights; he left his residence and headed out for opening day of deer hunting season. He was hunting in the exact area and disappeared on the exact date that Arthur Lepusha disappeared twenty-two years earlier.

Documentation di ers on Paul's age: some say he was twenty-six, and others indicate twenty-two. They also state that he had completed the enlistment period for the marines. It was reported that he knew the woods well and was an experienced hunter.

Paul left with friends to hunt the opening day of deer hunting season. The region he was hunting was very swampy, wet, and reportedly filled with deer. He had seen fellow hunters late in the day, and they saw him on the correct and well-worn trail headed back to his camp. It was reported that the trail was impossible to miss. He was never seen again.

The search for the young hunter started almost immediately. Again, weather caused major problems for searchers. Within four days of Paul vanishing, heavy snow caused o icials to terminate the search. Aircraft and ground teams searched, in total, sixty-five square miles. Interestingly, multiple periodicals noted that Paul was lost in the last old-growth stand of timber in Michigan. A November 18, 1931, article in the Ironwood Daily summarizes the frustration of o icials assigned to Paul's search: "The vast reaches of the forest have yielded no trace of the missing man, no signs of camp fires, no footprints in the mud along the bank of streams or in swamps. Nothing has been found to tell whether Paul McDowell is still alive, or whether, like many another before him, he has succumbed to cold, hunger, and

exhaustion, or perhaps injury."

No one heard gunshots that would indicate Paul was injured and needed assistance. No one saw smoke indicating he had started a fire. No one found tracks or evidence he was in the area.

In the months after Paul went missing, his brother actually tried to find work in the Gogebic region, so he could continue his personal quest to find his brother. In late June 1932, the McDowells were notified that a body had washed up on the shores of Lake Superior and that o icials believed it to be Paul. The family did view the body and confirmed it was not the missing hunter.

The frustration at not finding a missing son or brother haunts a family for a lifetime. Until you meet these people, you'll never understand how devastating it can be. Closure is key.

Raymond Maki

Missing: 11/27/36, Keweenaw Woods, north of Mohawk, Michigan
Age at disappearance: 17 years

Canine* Water* Previously Searched

Raymond lived on the far northern peninsula of Michigan in Copper City. He knew the area very well and understood the associated dangers of being in the woods. On November 27, 1936, he was rabbit hunting from the Hibbard Hunting Camp near the Keweenaw Woods. Raymond was dressed for the winter weather, and his dog accompanied him. He and friends agreed to meet back at the camp later that day. When Raymond never returned to camp, a massive search of the peninsula began.

The Menominee County Sheri 's O ice took the lead on the search for Raymond and was assisted by the Houghton County sheri . More than five hundred searchers participated in the e ort to locate the young man. Nearly six days into the search, deputies found Raymond's rifle lying on the ground approximately one half mile from the cabin he'd left from. Several hundred yards from the rifle, and in a swamp, searchers found the interior liner of Raymond's mitten. As searchers came back to their SAR camp, Raymond's dog had also returned.

After eleven days and hundreds of men scouring the woods in northern Michigan, deputies called o the search for Raymond Maki on December 8. The decision to terminate was made after four bloodhounds brought to the scene failed to pick up a scent trail.

Several facets of this case trouble me greatly. If Raymond were alive, he would never give up his gloves or rifle, as they are a lifeline for survival. Searchers never found any blood in the snow or any other articles of clothing. Bears in this region are hibernating during this time period, so they are not suspect. Searchers were completely puzzled about why their search dogs couldn't find a scent trail even though they found some of Raymond's clothing. Raymond knew never to walk into a swamp area, as this would be a life-threatening maneuver in late November, yet that is where searchers found his glove liner. I think it's interesting that Raymond's dog eventually made it back to camp several days after he went missing. The dog returning indicates to me that Raymond was long deceased.

The location of Raymond's disappearance is approximately eighty-five air miles northeast out onto the peninsula from a cluster of disappearances centering on the Ontonagon region.

There was no new information about Raymond's disappearance until May 1937. A May 11, 1937, article in the Marshall Evening Chronicle had this: "An inquest into the death of Raymond Maki, 17, who disappeared from home last Thanksgiving Day was discovered Sunday near the spot where his rifle had been found during the winter." An article in the Oshkosh Daily Northwestern from the same day stated that the body was found "20 feet from where Bloodhounds gave up the search last fall."

These facts don't add up. Bloodhounds will not miss a body they are searching for when it's twenty feet from them, especially multiple teams. A rifle is heavy and will fall through light snow and be di icult to spot. A body is much larger; it has density and bulk that is muck thicker than a rifle. It would be easier to see a body than a rifle. Hundreds of people vested in finding Raymond thoroughly searched the region around the rifle. The idea that they missed the body is hard to believe. Was it even there?

Edward William Woelfle

Missing: 10/6/46, four miles west of Boulder Junction, WI

Age at disappearance: 15 years Canines

Four newspaper articles addressed the disappearance of Edward Woelfle. I've placed the case in the Michigan section because of its proximity to the border and other related cases.

Edward was an active fifteen-year-old who enjoyed the great outdoors.

He specifically enjoyed hunting and trapping along the Wisconsin and Michigan border near Boulder Junction.

On October 5, 1946, Edward did not attend church and instead took his .22-caliber pistol, his shotgun, and seven wolf traps and a du el bag that contained wolf bait; he also took a lunch and headed into the woods. Edward's parents thought their son was going to an area near Whitney Lake in Wisconsin, as the boy knew this area very well. The area around Whitney Lake is quite lush, remote, and filled with dozens of lakes, creeks, and waterways. When Edward did not return on Sunday night, Mr. and Mrs. William Woelfle contacted law enforcement.

Searchers methodically covered the area near Whitney Lake and did find six of seven of Edward's wolf traps. It appeared to searchers that the seventh trap had been unlatched and could not be found. Searchers stated that there were no berries in the woods this time of year, but there was ample supply of porcupines walking wild in the area that someone could shoot and eat.

On October 9, 1946, there was an article in the Herald Times about the search for Edward; the article was titled "Push Hunt for Missing Youth." The searchers stated that they were now utilizing bloodhounds to aid in their search. Paragraph three of the article had an interesting notation: "Daniels [the dispatcher for the Trout Lake Ranger Station] said bloodhounds used the first two days were unable to uncover the youth's trail and that the dogs refused to follow footprints found in the woods." There are two points in this paragraph that need to be evaluated. Did the writer mean to say "footprints" versus "boot marks"? It would be very odd if there were footprints in the middle of the woods in November. It would make more sense that there were tracks or boot prints. It doesn't make any sense that the dogs would not track boot impressions or even footprints in the woods.

On October 14 the sheri involved in the search for William Woelfle decided to terminate all SAR operations. The sheri stated that he felt that the youth had gone to Alaska. This was an amazing claim since the only personal items missing from the residence were hunting equipment and bait, not a suitcase or clothing.

A massive review of newspaper archives failed to show that William was ever found. The area that William disappeared from is very similar to the topography of missing people throughout Minnesota and Michigan.

F. Hale Currier

Missing: 10/17/48, Newberry, MI

Age at disappearance: 53 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Canines

Every reader should put Newberry, Michigan, into his or her memory banks. It is an established geographical cluster of missing people who I have identified in past books. This chapter will add more to that list, including Hale Currier. The location is at the far northern edge of Michigan, with Lake Superior twenty miles to the north, Canada thirty miles to the east, and Lake Michigan twenty miles to the south. The center of this activity is Chesbrough Lake, identified in articles as seventeen miles north of Newberry. Harry Brownnell is another hunter who disappeared on the outskirts of Newberry on November 9, 1909. For more details on strange disappearances in this portion of Michigan, refer to Missing 411- LAW.

Just north of Detroit is the small town of Capac, Michigan. The city was founded over one hundred years before this incident and named after a Peruvian, Manco Capac. It sits on the Grand Trunk railroad line and boasted 960 residents. It is located halfway between Lapeer and Port Huron.

Hale Currier for thirty years owned a general merchandise store in Capac that was the centerpiece for the town's activity. Hale's wife, Lucy, helped him with the business and raised their two sons. In early October 1948, Hale left Capac and headed toward his hunting track north of Newberry adjacent to Chesbrough Lake in Luce County. He had a cabin in the area of the hunting land.

In the early-morning hours of October 17, 1948, Hale put on his army combat boots, army dungarees, green wool shirt, tan cap, and walked out of the cabin armed with his .22-caliber rifle. On his jacket he wore his Michigan small game license number H. A. 1033. He was last seen walking west toward a small ridge. When he didn't return that night, his hunting buddies got concerned and notified local authorities, who started a search.

Local headlines called the search for Hale the biggest search- and-rescue event in the history of the region. Searchers did everything you can imagine to find this man. The October 30, 1948, headlines in the Benton Harbor News stated how much Hale was loved by his town: "Town Moves 400 Miles in Hunt for Son." The article stated that 30

percent of the town residents went north to aid in the search. The article clarified how well equipped Hale was when he vanished: “Currier was known as an able woodsman. He had a rifle and compass and plenty of matches when he disappeared. To stay alive he would’ve built a fire and the searchers feel they would have sighted smoke.” They never saw any smoke in the region.

Bloodhounds were brought into the search, and none could ever pick up a scent. Airplanes were used and never saw anything of value. Hundreds of people organized into huge groups. The October 30, 1948, Escanaba Daily explained the e ort: “The men are lined up in groups of 25, 50 and as high as 85 abreast, being 10-15 feet apart and kept in straight lines proceeding through the heavily wooded area. The lines are led by Sgt. John Pennala and troopers of Michigan State Police of Newberry and Conservation O icers.” It wasn’t only Capac residents that rallied for the cause. The Newberry High School varsity football team volunteered its time and searched. It seemed like everyone wanted to find this guy-

Inclement weather and heavy snow eventually terminated the search. It was three inches of heavy snow that caused o icials to call o the e ort to find Hale.

There was a five-hundred-dollar reward o ered to anyone who could find Hale’s body. The money stirred interest, and people did search.

On May 7, 1949, the city of Capac again came together to find Hale. Two carloads of residents drove to Newberry, established a camp and searched. They found nothing of any value.

The biggest and most comprehensive search in the history of Newberry couldn’t find Hale. Canines never found a scent. Airplanes never saw smoke. Ground searchers walking shoulder to shoulder never saw any tracks. Zero clues as to Hale’s whereabouts were found.

My question: was he even there?

Robert Lapine

Missing: 11/19/48, 2:00 p.m., Negaunee, MI

Age at disappearance: 16 years (some documents state 15 years)
Water« Weather

Negaunee, Michigan, is 44 miles northeast of Sidnaw and the location of the disappearance of Robert Beilby. It is also almost exactly 120

miles west of the October 17, 1948, disappearance of Hale Currier. That's correct: just twenty-three days after Hale vanished, Robert Lapine disappeared.

Robert went to high school and had his residence in Champion, Michigan. The school was no more than five miles from the hunting grounds where Robert hunted. He was an athlete and played on the school's varsity basketball team.

On November 19,1948, Robert drove the five miles to his hunting grounds nine miles west of Negaunee in a swamp-filled environment that produced a lot of deer. He had told his parents that he'd be back that night. When he didn't arrive, the Lapines notified local authorities, who started a search.

Within twelve hours of the disappearance, the conservation department had gathered fifty searchers and organized them into groups to search specific areas. Just as the searchers were getting organized and e ectively searching, snow started falling on Saturday, November 20, and didn't stop for two days. The storm dropped over fifteen inches in many areas and more in others. This made the e ort to find Robert brutal. A November 24 article in the Detroit Free Press had information about how Robert's school rallied around the search e ort: "Meanwhile, Champion High School called o a basketball game tonight to throw its team into the search for Robert Lapine, 16, a missing deer hunter. Lapine was a member of the squad which was to have met Trout Creek High School."

Nearly one hundred people searched for Robert over two weeks. Two ski-equipped planes were dispatched by the state, flew the skies for three days, and found nothing. There was a two-hundred-dollar reward posted for Robert on November 23.

As part of any search, the lead search agency must also develop credible information. A November 21, 1948, article in the Deseret News had information on what was found: "The hunter, Robert J. Lapine of Champion, was last seen in a wooded patch eight miles west of Negaunee. Sgt. James Smith head of the Marquette o ice of the Michigan State Police said, 'There is little hope left of finding him alive.'" A strong statement by Sgt. Smith considering Robert had been gone forty-eight hours.

The search for Robert continued formally and informally through Thanksgiving weekend. A November 25,1948, article in the La Crosse Tribune explained the passion behind the e ort: "Many deer hunters

were taking advantage of the Thanksgiving holiday to spend a long weekend in the north woods but one man, Fred Lapine of Champion, spent the day searching for his 15-year old son.

The boy, Robert Lapine, has been missing since Friday in Marquette County and state police say they believe it is 'almost an impossibility that he will be found alive.'"

I don't think Fred cared what o icials thought. If there was an infinitesimal chance of finding his boy, he was going to try. The number of fathers I have written about that lost their boys in the woods is significant. Their grief and guilt can never be understood until you've walked in their shoes, it must be horrific.

A November 30, 1948, article in the Escanaba Daily Press described the next major point in the search to find Robert: "O icers said the search was being abandoned because of weather conditions. The depth of the snow in the vicinity where Robert was seen last made recovery of a lost body almost impossible they said."

The last article I can find on Robert's disappearance involved a search by the American Legion chapter in Champion. In April 1949 they gathered the community together and again searched the area where Robert was last seen. They found nothing.

Walter Kline

Missing: 11/15/55, 7:00 a.m., Marenisco, MI

Age at disappearance: 52 years Point of Separation* Weather

Walter Kline was the co-owner of a paint and wallpaper store on Pipestone Street in Benton Harbor, Michigan. He lived in the city with his sister-in-law and his nephew and niece. He was known around town as a very congenial man that was well liked by the community. Walter's main pastime was hunting. He went to the area outside of Marenisco approximately thirty-five miles southwest of Sidnaw and

thirty-five miles southeast of location of the disappearance of Arthur Lepusha. Kline had gone to this exact area last year and did get a deer the first day of the season.

On November 11, 1955, Walter had left Benton Harbor headed toward Marenisco with his two cousins, Royce and Arthur Biller. Royce was from Millford, Indiana, and Arthur was from Gary, Indiana. All were experienced hunters and arrived at the hunting camp on Saturday, November 12. The men scouted the region the following two days.

On November 15, Walter was one of the first men up at camp for the opening day of deer season. He had breakfast and told his cousins he'd see them at noon for lunch. He was last seen walking into the woods.

Royce and Arthur weren't terribly concerned when Walter didn't arrive back in camp at his agreed-upon time. But their concern grew with every passing hour that Walter failed to arrive. By late that night, the alarms went o , and the men called for assistance. Just as the formal search was starting to take o , a major obstacle hit the region as is described in the headlines of the News-Palladium of November 17, 1955: "B. H. Deer Hunter Walter Kline Lost in Wilds, Blizzard Howls over Place He Disappeared." The blizzard dumped from fifteen inches to two feet of snow and stopped all searches. Crews did go out the following three days and had zero luck finding anything. The search was essentially terminated on November 20.

Small searches continued through the winter for Walter; all were unsuccessful. On May 14, 1956, Walter's relatives o ered a six-hundred-dollar reward for anyone who could find his body. This did stimulate some activity. On May 17, a man of the cloth made an unusual find, as is described in this May 18, 1956 article in the Wakefield News'. "The body of Walter Kline, Benton Harbor, Michigan, deer hunter who disappeared November 15, north of Marenisco was found at 9:30 Thursday morning. The body was found

by Seminarian Joseph Annese of Villa St. Thomas of Lake Gogebic." The exact location wasn't clear, nor was the circumstances, other than it stated that he was found in a swamp. My past books have described many people who were lost and later found in swamps. Sometimes the people were lost in the area of a swamp and never found.

Add Walter Kline to an ever-growing list of people who vanished in this area of Michigan. Remember this about Walter: he knew this area very, very well and had hunted it for years.

Larry Wyco

Missing: 11/25/77, noon, Sharon, MI

Age at disappearance: 15 years

Point of Separation« Canines« Weather« Previously Searched There is some confusion amid the multitude of articles about the exact location of this event. I will clear this up. Some articles state this happened in Garfield Plantation, just south of Traverse City. That would be incorrect. Just east of Traverse City is Kalkaska, a small city near the center of the peninsula. Six miles southeast of Kalkaska is the small city of Sharon. It won't be on many maps; it is located at the intersections of West Sharon Road East and Fletcher Road Southeast. The exact location of this was on the southeast side of the Manistee River near the intersection of Dutch John Road and South Sharon Road.

In November 1977, Larry Wycko was a sophomore at Tower High School in Warren, Michigan. Larry's parents, Dean and Beverly, were divorced. Dean was an engineer for the US Army in their tank arsenal branch in Warren. Beverly was a sale agent for a builder in Citation. Larry had two brothers: Don, seventeen years old, and Tom, thirteen years old. He also had two sisters: Cindy, eighteen years old, and Kathy, twenty.

On November 25, 1977, Larry was camping in a small trailer o South Sharon Road. He was with the following guys: Steve Laduke, sixteen years old from Roseville; Mark Laduke, sixteen years old from Roseville; Bob Breske, nineteen years old and Larry's sister Cindy's boyfriend from Warren; Tom Stewart, sixteen years old from Warren.

The hunters left their trailer together and hiked two miles east. Everybody went but Steve. One of the guys shot a buck and wounded it slightly. Everybody tracked for a while and then gave up when they got near a road. Larry decided to keep going because the animal was

wounded. The guys attempted to get him to quit. He kept tracking.

Everyone returned to the trailer for lunch and expected to see Larry waiting there. He wasn't at the camp. The guys called out his name, searched the area he was last seen, and then contacted the local sheri . The first deputy got on scene at 3:00 p.m.

Larry was wearing snowmobile boots, coat, cap, and one glove. He liked to keep his trigger hand free of a glove. He was also carrying his rifle.

Deputies searched all that first night. They even managed to have a tracking dog on scene those first few hours. Nothing was found. On Saturday, November 26, light snow was falling in be-tween a freezing rain. A Coast Guard helicopter came into the area and had to be grounded because of icing. It did come back the following day, along with a Michigan Department of Natural Resources helicopter and a private helicopter from Traverse City. A private plane also volunteered their time. In the first two days of searching, SAR teams had 125 people on the ground and up to five di erent canine teams participating. This was a very good response.

On December 4, the Michigan State Police sent five of their best tracking canines into the search area. Again, nothing was found. Searchers were stunned that they had not found Larry or evidence where he must've been. After ten days, the o icial search was terminated. Family and friends continued searching through the winter. These additional e orts produced no positive results.

The next part of this case deviates significantly from the stories I've documented in the past. I am one of the most open people you will ever meet when it comes to understanding missing persons cases. I have seen too many instances where someone called a psychic, remote viewer, and so forth steps into a case and assists in finding the person. I would never push assistance away from someone who is a proven success in finding people. In early May 1978, Kalkaska County sheri 's deputy Steve Linn got five psychics to help him on the Larry Wyco case. One psychic drew a sketch of where the body would be located. The psychic said that the view was from the air. The psychic wished to remain anonymous because of concerns about the public's reaction. The picture appears as though you're looking down on a body amid high grass, near a beaver pond and creek. Deputy Linn took the sketch to many area residents in the region where Larry vanished. One of the people who saw the sketch was a local retired carpenter named Charles Stuck. Stuck had trapped the area for sixty years and called

the region in the sketch “South Swamp.” He stated that he knew exactly where it was. The location was about one and a half miles from where Larry entered the woods. Another article stated it was one mile from where he entered the woods.

The initial search failed to find the body. The second time through, Charles Stuck found Larry Wyco . Deputy Linn said that the area where the body was found looked just like the sketch the psychic provided. It’s interesting because the deputy gave interviews stating that he really wasn’t involved in Larry’s case but was asked by supervisors to meet with the psychics who had volunteered and keep them out of the hair of the investigators on the case. What supervisors told Linn is discouraging; it shows the closed-minded attitude many in law enforcement have to this day. A May 11, 1978, article in the Detroit Free Press had this statement about Larry’s lo-cation: “The body was found in an area where searchers had looked many times before.” You need to start keeping track of the number of times you see that statement in this book and then add that to the number of times I’ve written that in five other books.

The day after Larry’s body was found, his parents went back to the scene and attempted to understand how he’d gotten into that area and how hundreds of searchers, over a dozen canines, three helicopters, two airplanes, and hundreds of professional and volunteers failed to find their son.

An autopsy said that Larry died from exposure. There was no description of the body when it was found and no details of what he was or wasn’t wearing when located.

One of the more important details of this case is the distance Larry was found from the point last seen. Articles vary on this distance between one and one and a half miles. It doesn’t matter which was correct; the fact is that he wasn’t far away. Numerous reports of the incident stated that searchers repeatedly covered a ten-square- mile area. Larry should’ve seen or heard the helicopters and ground teams in the area. I truly don’t understand how Larry was repeatedly missed. How did more than twelve canine units not find him?

After readers have completed my past books, the common response to these stories is that the majority of readers don’t believe the body was there during the search. I want to make it absolutely clear; this is not an indictment of the search-and-rescue community. The vast majority of searchers are volunteers and risk time away from family and friends to save another’s life. I do not believe that professional and volunteer

searchers, helicopters, and airplanes can all miss bodies like I describe. Even if you take the human element out of the searches, canines are also failing in these instances.

Oscar Hintta

Missing: 11/16/88, 4:30 p.m., Kenton, MI

Age at disappearance: 65 years Disability/ Illness* Canines* Weather*

Point of Separation

During my years of researching unusual disappearances, Michigan is high on the list for strangeness. The disappearances are ba ling, unconventional, and we found there are three geographical clusters of missing in the state. One of those clusters is just west of the location of this incident, the woods around Kenton. Within a radius of one hundred miles, we have documented ten disappearances that match our established profile.

In this area of North America, there are fourteen geographical clusters in the United States and Canada that completely surround the Great Lakes. In past books I have told readers to obtain a copy of The Great Lakes Triangle by Jay Gourley. Mr. Gourley does a good job of identifying aircraft, ships, and people that have vanished under highly unusual circumstances for over one hundred years throughout the Great Lakes. The book was published in 1977, and there are still used copies available.

One of the profile points I have discussed in every book is that a high number of people with disabilities of some type disappear in an unusually high number of circumstances. It happened in this incident. The second major profile point that is consistent in the majority of stories is the sudden change in weather. You will find that weather played a major role in this incident.

Oscar Hintta was a married and retired custodian living sixty-five miles north of Kenton in Calumet, Michigan. Calumet is a small township just two miles southeast of Lake Superior. Oscar was a lifelong hunter who enjoyed getting into the woods and hunting for deer. On November 16, 1988, Oscar and his longtime friend John Lapalainen left their residences in Calumet and drove sixty-five miles south to their hunting grounds in Kenton. Oscar and John had one major health issue in common. Both were diabetic. John's diabetes had hit him harder than Oscar's, and John could walk only a few hundred yards before he'd have to get back to the car. Oscar was relatively healthier than John even though he also had a mild heart condition.

The men arrived on the outskirts of Kenton at a wooded setting. Oscar told John that he'd be back by 4:30 p.m. and took his rifle and disappeared into the bush. John walked a short distance from the car and sat on a stump he found. Both men were alone and hunting on November 16.

Kenton is approximately forty-five miles northeast of Presque Isle and twenty miles south of Lake Superior. It is an area with very thick woods. It does not have any huge mountains and is mostly a slow-rolling landscape of brush, swamps, and water.

At four thirty, Oscar did not come back. John was hollering for his friend and waited several hours for him to return. He did not come back. John got into their vehicle and drove into town to obtain the sheri 's assistance.

As John was reporting Oscar as missing, he didn't realize that Houghton County undersheri Gary Beauchamp already had his concerns about the area where Oscar vanished. On January 17, 1987, John Buccanero was riding his snowmobile thirty miles northwest of Oscar when he disappeared. A June 13, 1994, article in the Milwaukee Sentinel supplied key details that readers will readily understand as critical: "John Buccanero, a mentally disabled man with a speech disorder, was wearing a red helmet and black overalls the day he disappeared. He had been snowmobiling with several friends. Because he kept a slower pace, he always traveled last in line." In Missing 411: North America and Beyond, I included a section about people who had been last in line in a group and had vanished an inordinate number of times. The Hu ington Post ran an article on November 26, 2013, titled "Missing Person Cases: Never Be Last in Line." The search was centered in the area between Ontonagon and Greenland, Michigan, very near Lake Superior. Later in the same Milwaukee Sentinel article quoted earlier: "John Buccanero's snowmobile turned up a couple months later 10 miles in the opposite direction from where it should have been heading. The keys were in the ignition and gas was in the tank."

There was a weeklong search for John. They could not locate the man. Fifteen years later his body was located in an area that had been searched during the initial seven-day event. There was no indication of the cause of death.

In December 1992, just miles from where John Buccanero vanished on January 17,1987, Raymond Lewis vanished. He was a fisherman who was described as extremely smart. He told friends he was fishing a river. He disappeared just miles from Buccanero and Pattison. His truck was found with keys in the ignition and gas in the tank. He has never been found.

On August 26,1993, Jan Pattison, a nurse, was visiting some elderly friends. She left the home at 10:30 p.m. driving her 1989 Ford Tempo

when she vanished. On September 1 her car was found on a lonely dirt road. The vehicle appeared to be stuck. Her keys were in the ignition, and gas was in the tank. Jan was a chain-smoker, and, unusually, her cigarettes were found in the car, along with her wallet, cash, and other personal belongings. She was never found.

I have just presented a cluster of highly unusual disappearance in the same general time frame as Oscar: John Buccanero (01/17/87), Oscar Hintta (11/16/88), Raymond Lewis (12/92), and Jan Pattison (08/26/93). Buccanero, Lewis, and Pattison disappeared within miles of each other and just miles from Lake Superior. Oscar vanished approximately thirty miles south.

The law enforcement o icer who was ultimately responsible for Oscar's search was Jim Ruotsala of the Houghton County Sheri 's O ice. When he was asked if the search for Oscar was compromised at any level, he made the following statement in an undated article in the Mining Gazette: "First, there was a heavy rain, almost like a monsoon," Ruotsala recalled. "Then we had a big snowstorm that shut down things for a couple of days." Later in the same article: "'Residents in the area said they never recalled a storm quite like that,' said Routsala."

Undersheri Beauchamp waited for the skies to clear and then pulled out all of the search-and-rescue tools in an e ort to find Oscar. The US Coast Guard patrolled the skies; multiple canine teams crisscrossed the forest, along with hundreds of professional searchers. In a June 14,1994, article in the Argus Press, the undersheri expressed his opinion about the searches: "Hundreds of searchers, some using aircraft and dogs have found no significant clues in any of the investigations. 'We can't explain it,' said Gary Beauchamp, the Houghton County undersheri who led the search for Hintta and Lewis. 'We've exhausted all possibilities.' Investigators say it is hard to fathom how missing people could drop from sight without a trace."

These types of statements from law enforcement aren't common. They are normally very stoic and express to the public a sense that everything is in control. It's obvious from the undersheri 's demeanor that law enforcement was ba led. It wasn't going to get any better.

In December 1992, Raymond Lewis, a fisherman, was reported missing. He was fifty-five years old, a handyman and poet from Dollar Bay, Michigan, just four miles from Oscar's residence. He went missing in the county adjacent to where Oscar vanished. They found his truck just a very short distance from the location that John

Buccanero was last seen on his snowmobile. As if strangeness couldn't resist hitting the same area again, in August 1993, Jan Pattison (thirty-nine years old) was leaving a house she was visiting when she also vanished in close proximity to where Lewis's truck was found. Her vehicle was found just o the side of a road. The keys, cigarettes, and other items were in the car. It was found six days after she vanished. Lewis's truck was also found with keys in the ignition and gas in the tank. It was drivable. Many people have called this area the "Bermuda Triangle of the north." Others have identified this region as the Great Lakes Triangle. The only person of this group that was ever found was John Buccanero.

The frustration of law enforcement centered on the failure of proven search-and-rescue techniques. A canine team may not be working correctly one day, but rarely do multiple teams consistently fail. Hundreds of searchers combed the forest and found no evidence that Oscar had even walked the area. A trained group of Coast Guard rescuers that are specifically trained to search from the sky saw nothing. What makes the Coast Guard search even more baffling is that it was reported in multiple publications that Oscar was completely dressed in bright orange.

Oscar Hintta's disappearance actually made an episode of the television show Unsolved Mysteries.

Two years after Oscar Hintta vanished, his best friend, John Lappalainen, died.

Conclusions

We study history for a reason. The disappearances form a defined cluster centering on the region between Sidnaw and Rockland. I presented ten cases that defy conventional explanations. The clustering of these disappearances continues the patterns I have outlined in five previous books. If you looked at this issue for just the last few decades, the clusters would not emerge. Why is this important? The fact that the disappearances were happening in the early 1900s shows that this isn't a new phenomenon.

The proximity to water, bad weather immediately following the disappearance, inability of Bloodhounds to pick up a scent, and the cluster e ect are all profile points that I have discussed extensively in past books. Why aren't these disappearances of hunters spread throughout rural areas of Michigan? If these were random occurrences without anything unusual associated, common sense would indicate

that these should be spread throughout all of the hunting grounds of the state. The fact that these specific incidents have happened in a fairly confined area should raise concern. If the hunters vanished in large numbers within a short time frame, that would raise alarms to local residents. If you spread the incidents out over many months or years, they can be easily missed. The disappearance of three hunters in five days in 1909 should have raised some red flags. The fact that two di erent sets of hunters vanished on the same day years apart could be attributed to the opening days of deer season and a lack of experience by outdoorsman, yet many of these men were experienced.

Minnesota

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Jim McGrath 06/10/40, noon* 80*M

Walter Anderson 09/19/53-Noon* 51*M

Kory Kelly 10/16/2006* 38*M

Jim McGrath

Missing: 6/10/40, noon, McGrath, MN Age at disappearance: 80 years
Canines

When an elderly person spends his entire life walking, hiking, hunting, and working the same land for over eighty years, it is quite doubtful (absent some disability) he would get lost, but stranger things have happened. Jim McGrath was born and raised in a region of northern Minnesota just ten miles east of Millie Lacs Lake and seventy miles north of Minneapolis. The family settled in this area in the late 1800s. The land had plenty of timber to harvest, fish in the nearby Snake River, and significant populations of deer and bear. The McGrath family was considered wealthy due to the amount of land they owned. The McGraths donated all of the property to establish the town of McGrath, Minnesota.

Jim was eighty years old and still hiking and hunting the woods and managing the timber company that he and his son, Jay, operated. At noon on June 10, 1940, Jay and Jim were ten miles north of McGrath, examining a tract they were considering selling, and one article stated Jim was also checking it for deer. Jim told Jay he was going to examine an outer area and asked Jay to wait for about an hour, and he'd be back. He set o down an old logging road and into dense brush. A June 21, 1940, article in the Bismarck Tribune described the

physical fitness of Jim and actually stated that he “walked briskly down an old logging road.” Jay waited for almost two hours for his dad and then started to aggressively search. After looking and calling out Jim’s name in all of the obvious places, Jay left to call law enforcement for assistance.

Aitkin County sheri Ned Price took over all aspects of the search for Jim McGrath. The sheri dedicated almost every re-source at his disposal, including bloodhounds, forest rangers, dep-uties, National Guard, Civilian Conservation Corps, and volunteers, all working in grid patterns trying to find Jim. Bloodhounds couldn’t pick up Jim’s scent, and searchers were not finding any evidence of where the man might be. After eleven days of exhaustive searching, Sheri Price terminated the search for Jim McGrath.

Summary

The decision to cease the search for Jim wasn’t an easy one for Sheri Price. Jim was one of the county’s most prominent people and one of the wealthiest.

One of the major complications in the search for Jim was that the area in which he vanished was very thick with vegetation and very wet and swampy, making it treacherous for searchers. Knowing the bloodhounds couldn’t pick up the man’s scent was perplexing to the sheri . Everyone knew that Jim didn’t get lost; he knew the area like we know our backyards. It’s always possible that Jim died in the woods and wasn’t found, but you’d think cadaver dogs or searchers would start to smell his body in the humid Minnesota landscape.

The area where this disappearance occurred is one hundred fifty miles south of an area in northern Minnesota where a series of disappearances happened that are described in Missing 411: Eastern United States.

I could never find any documentation that Jim McGrath was ever found.

Walter Anderson

Missing: 09/19/53- Noon, Swatara, MN Age at disappearance: 51 years Canines* Previously Searched* Point of Separation

It's extremely rare that I've written about a missing politician, but this story is about just that. A small-town mayor from

Minnesota that vanishes on a routine hunting trip on a relatively flat piece of land, not a routine story you'll find in my books.

In September of 1953, 51-year-old Walter Anderson was employed by the Texas Company in Minneapolis. He was also the mayor of Morningside, Minnesota, a suburban town southwest of the same town he worked. Walter was a married man with no children who loved the outdoors and especially Partridge hunting. On September 19, 1953, Walter and two friends from his company, Walter Bradley and George Johnson made the drive thirty miles north of Aitkin and seventy miles west of Duluth to the small town of Swatara. The guys pulled o the highway and were hunting a 325 acres triangular tract bordered on two sides by road and one side by a creek. It was a relatively flat parcel with a few small hills.

The guys parked their car at approximately 11:30 am and agreed to split up and be back in twenty minutes. There was not a lot of ground to cover, so the small amount of time in the field made sense. Johnson and Bradley returned to the car, Anderson did not. The guys searched the ground multiple times and found nothing. The group was old hunting buddies and knew that if Anderson were lost, he'd fire o three rounds, he didn't. It was just after noon when it was decided that the sheri should be called.

Hjalmer Hulin was the Aitkin County Sheri and rallied resources to look for the missing hunter. This September 21, 1953 article in the Star Tribune had details on the SAR, "Aided by Blood-hounds and an airplane, a posse of about 100 men Sunday combed a hilly, wooded area two miles north of here (Swatara) in the search for Walter W. Anderson, 51 of the Minneapolis suburbs of Morningside." Once the disappearance of Walter reached the Texas Company, dozens of men converged on Swatara to look for their friend. The number of searchers topped 150 on one day.

On September 23, Sheri Hulin announced that after three days the search was over. They had covered the area shoulder to shoulder multiple times and found nothing. Multiple dog teams had worked in

the area, and no scent was located.

On September 27 there was another search of the same plot of land for Walter. People stated that most of the area looked trampled down because so many people had combed the region. Three additional canines were run through the land and again found nothing. The theory that was put out by the sheri was that Walter might be delusional and he's wandering the highways near the property.

There was nothing new on this case until Sunday, November 16, 1953, as is described in this November 16, 1953 article in the Star Tribune, "Anderson's body was found at 1:00 pm by Patrick Asmus, 16, who was hunting the area with his father George Asmus and some companions. The body was discovered 400 feet o the highway in an area north of the triangular 325-acre tract- where Anderson disappeared. Both areas had been scoured several times by search parties using Bloodhounds and airplanes." Articles stated that Walter had fallen on his face and was located amongst the brush and a fallen tree. I can only guess what searchers thought when they heard of the discovery. The sheri made a statement in the November 16, 1953 edition of the Star Tribune, "Hulin, who had directed several search parties, said the area which Anderson was found had been gone over by 150 workers two days after the mayor was reported missing. The sheri said at the time: "I just can't understand it: the searchers have been almost shoulder to shoulder, and we haven't found a trace."

The words by the sheri are identical to dozens and dozens of other SAR commanders who have been shocked to find a missing victim located almost under their noses. Do I believe that 150 searchers combing the ground shoulder to shoulder can miss a victim lying in the grass, possibly? Do I think six di erent canines combing the parcel for the victim, a reasonably small plot could miss the victim, maybe? How about the possibility that airplanes flying over the land could maybe not see the victim, it's possible? What would be the odds that all three of these search tools failed, not once, but dozens and dozens of times on too many cases to count?

There was never any mention of what Walter was wearing when he was located. The coroner for this region at that times was Dr. Erich Blaufuss, and he stated that Walter died of a heart attack and there would not be an autopsy. In reality, Dr. Blaufuss was guessing on the cause of Walter's demise.

Kory Kelly

Missing: 10/16/2006, Red Lake Wilderness, Four Town, MN

Age at disappearance: 38 years

Weather« Canines« Previously Searched« Missing Clothing

Jim Neprud and Kory Kelly were good friends. The buddies decided to go grouse hunting in northern Minnesota. Kelly made the trip from his home in Crookstown, Minnesota, to the Red Lake State Wildlife Management Area. Neprud joined him at the campsite midafternoon on October 16. The men started to set up their camp, and Neprud realized they needed gas, which they had forgotten to get. Neprud stated that he would go into Four Town and make the pur-chase while Kory stayed behind with Neprud's dog. Neprud stated that he last saw Kory two hundred yards south of the camp with his shotgun, and he was headed out to shoot a grouse. Neprud left the campsite at five thirty and returned at seven.

Neprud arrived back at the campsite to find that Kory had been collecting firewood, but he couldn't find Kelly. It was getting late in the afternoon and close to dark, and he was starting to get nervous. He also realized that his own golden Labrador, Sammy, was missing. He could see that Kory had taken his shotgun, so he felt he'd probably left to kill a grouse. It was now late in the night, and it started to rain.

As darkness engulfed the campsite, Neprud honked his horn and flashed the truck lights, all in an e ort to alert Kory of the location. It became late, and Neprud went to sleep hoping that Kory would return; he didn't. The next morning Neprud awoke at four and did search for his friend and could not locate him. He walked almost two miles from the campsite in an e ort to find Kory and still could not locate any evidence of him. Neprud eventually flagged down two people passing by the campsite, explained that a camper was missing, and asked them to notify law enforcement. Kory Kelly had been visiting this exact area of the Red Lakes Wilderness since he was a child; this was the first visit for Jim Neprud. They were a half mile inside of Beltrami County, and the Beltrami sheri , Keith Winger, took the lead organizing the SAR.

Searchers combed the area of the campsite and then with the use of ATVs started to expand their search into the wilderness. This was very di icult terrain: tall grasses, lots of water and swamps, and many bogs. For almost two weeks, searchers found nothing. On Wednesday, October 25, two hunters were nine miles from the Neprud and Kelly campsite; they found Neprud's Labrador, Sammy, wandering the

woods. The dog was dehydrated and hungry but in generally decent condition.

On Saturday, October 28, searchers found Kory Kelly's cigarette lighter and cigarettes. On October 29 trackers from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension found Kory's overalls, socks, and hooded sweatshirt fourteen miles from the original campsite.

On October 30 Beltrami County emergency management coordinator Beryl Wernberg stated that weather had sabotaged the search, and they were terminating their e orts at this point. They stated that snow had started to fall, and there was two inches on the ground.

In mid-November the search for Kory Kelly started again. The best search dogs in Minnesota were brought to the scene and after thirteen more days were unable to locate Kory. On November 23 the search for Kory Kelly was terminated for the winter. Searchers had now conducted two di erent searches each lasting approximately two weeks. They had found clothing fifteen miles from the campsite and scoured that location for Kory; he was not found.

On April 28 the search for Kory Kelly resumed with the sheri 's department flying over the area where Kory's clothes and other personal belongings had been found. North of the Rapid River walking bridge o of Rapid River Road near the Moose River Road and north of Four Town, the air team spotted a body amid eight-foot-tall reeds fifteen feet o the trail. The body the air team spotted was Kory Kelly.

Jan Kelly is Kory Kelly's mother and was interviewed after the body was recovered and after the search team and the sheri 's department debriefed her. On October 31, 2006, Jan Kelly stated, "They [the sheri 's department] can't believe he got 14 miles from the campsite. He probably got there the first night. He must've been flying through the trees, the bushes. I can't believe he could've gotten that far."

I ordered the report on the incident from the Beltrami County sheri and a copy of the cause of death from the coroner's o ice. The death certificate stated that Kory died from hypothermia.

I am in total agreement with Jan Kelly. I can't believe that Kory Kelly could leave late in the afternoon and travel more than fourteen miles through the swampy terrain to his final destination; it's seemingly impossible.

In the reports I did receive from the sheri 's department, there is one form that states that Neprud's dog was located. It was found in the

general area that Kory went missing. Biological samples were taken from the dog and forwarded to a lab. The report states that the remains and samples were going to be checked for human remains or clothing. The samples were taken to the lab on October 26, 2006.

Summary I have personally studied the Kory Kelly case for two years; it has been a SAR incident that has disturbed me. Kory was not new to the area; he had been visiting this region of the Red Lake Management Area for over twenty-five years. He was an experienced hunter and camper and knew the dangers associated with hunting in October in Minnesota. Kory also knew that you don't hunt at night and that this specific area posed extreme dangers at dark because of the bogs and swamps.

Please refer to the statement that Kory's mom, Jan, made to the media regarding the location of Kory's body. The sheri 's department said that they could not believe that Kory got to a location fourteen miles away from the campsite in only one night. The sheri 's department did not explain why they felt Kory died the first night, but it's obvious to everyone that traveling that distance through that type of terrain does not make any sense; you'd have to be superhuman to travel that distance in that time frame. Another part of this equation does not make sense: why were Kory's clothes o ?

Many of the articles written about the Kory Kelly incident stated that it was possible that Kory su ered from hypothermia and took his clothes o , as this is sometimes claimed to be a condition of hypothermia. If the sheri 's theory is correct, that Kory did die the first night, hypothermia could not be the reason for taking o his clothes. Kory had a lighter and the ability to make fire: why would he throw his lighter on the trail? He had his friend's dog with him: all hikers and campers know that if you snuggle with a dog, the dog will keep you warm through the night. Kory also knew that it takes many hours for hypothermia to set in when you are properly equipped, as Kory was. Kory also knew that his firearm was one of the main methods to attract attention or assistance: why didn't SAR teams locate his firearm?

Kory Kelly was located in the middle of a very high patch of grass just fifteen feet from a main walking path. Think this through very clearly: why would anyone choose to stay in high grass versus a clear and defined walking path. You wouldn't. If you wanted to be found, you'd stay in one place; you wouldn't walk or run fourteen miles in one night.

There is no way in this world Kory Kelly walked fourteen miles the first night he disappeared. If he was lost, I believe he would've found a cozy location among the trees, made a small shelter with branches, started a fire with the cigarettes and lighter that he possessed, and built a fire to last the night. Once the light of day came, Kory would've had better bearings and a much better chance to understand his location and walk out of the swamps and bogs. If the worst-case scenario had occurred, if he was injured, he could've utilized his firearm to alert others of his location.

Another oddity to this story is the condition Sammy (Neprud's Labrador) was found in several days after Kory disappeared. Searchers stated that the dog had eaten deer meat to stay alive. How did the searchers know that the dog ate deer meat? Were biological samples taken from his stomach? Where did the deer meat come from? Searchers also stated that Sammy was dehydrated. There is more fresh water in the Red Lakes area than most people could possibly imagine: how could Sammy be dehydrated unless the dog was somehow confined and restricted in its movements?

The last and most obvious indicator that something very, very odd happened to Kory: his cell phone was never used. Yes, there was intermittent cell reception in the Red Lakes area, but if you were traveling fourteen to fifteen miles across a wide-open region, you would've had reception, or your phone would've pinged a transponder/repeater of your location: this did not happen.

The area where Kory disappeared is one of the most desolate, rural, and hard-to-walk locations in North America. I have no doubt there are thousands of acres in this area that have never been walked by a human. The water of the bogs and swamps o er complete isolation to the mammals and other animals that inhabit the wilderness area. It's a bit scary to think how many people have disappeared from northern Minnesota, especially when most were alone and in that same rural environment.

I want everyone to understand that Kory left the campsite well prepared. He had the following items with him: cell phone, lighter, cigarettes, dog, coat, firearm, and ammunition. All of the above items were recovered except the firearm. One shell was recovered, but others were not. The dog was found several days after Kory disappeared. Kory's socks were found near other clothes, again presumably discarded the first night. There is something very, very wrong with the scenario presented by the sheri of Kory Kelly's disappearance and the eventually discovery of his body.

Counties and cities do not fall under the federal FOIA requirement. State, city, and county agencies do not have to supply the public with reports they have written. I did request reports from the Beltrami County sheri and did receive partial reports.

Missouri

Missing Person Date Missing« Age» Sex

David Skaggs 11/24/96-9:00 a.m.» 55» M

David Skaggs

Missing: 11/24/96- 9:00 a.m., Buford Mountain, MO

Age at disappearance: 55 years

Canines» Weather» Point of Separation

Missouri may seem like an unusual location for a missing person fitting our criteria, quite the contrary. This is the eighth person, all males that have vanished in Show Me State.

David Skaggs spent a lifetime working Wallace Idaho at the Galena Mine. After he retired, the 55-year-old moved to Desloge, Missouri to live near his daughter and son in law, Jim Bebout.

On November 24, 1996, Jim and David decided to go deer hunting twenty miles southwest of Park Hills, Missouri at a location called Buford Mountain. The pair had hunted the same area the previous day and hadn't seen any deer, and they were coming back again for better luck.

The pair entered the woods early in the morning and agreed to meet back in the vehicle at 9:00 a.m., David never arrived. Jim spent the majority of the day yelling and searching for his father in law, he saw and heard nothing. Late in the afternoon, he notified the Iron County Sheri 's o ice.

The sheri gathered resources from throughout the state to look for the retiree. There was an intense three-day SAR that couldn't locate anything. This December 4, 1996 article in the Daily Journal had SAR details, "State foresters, search dogs, volunteers, a helicopter and the Iron County Sheri 's Department searched in vain in inclement weather, calling o the search three days later." Three days seems like a short period of time to search for anyone. But nobody had heard any

gunshots, the typical method for hunters to notify others they are lost and in need of assistance. The Bebout family got locals to dedicate their time to search, and this extended the SAR an additional four days; still, nothing was located.

There were no updates on this incident until a hunter made a discovery in this April 24, 1998 article in the Daily Journal, “Gum said the owner of the property where the remains were found was turkey hunting when he and a companion found them about 400 yards o the end of Washington County Road 536. He said the site was up the side of Hughes Mountain in particularly rugged terrain common to the area. The Washington County scene is about eight miles northwest of Buford Mountain in Iron County where Skaggs had entered the woods when he went hunting with his son in law.”

Articles stated that David Skaggs was thin, a smoker and not in the best of health. Documents indicate that David went down the side of Buford Mountain, walked across a small valley and then walked back up Hughes Mountain. The sun would be setting over his left shoulder; he knew he was walking in a northerly direction. The remains left little to autopsy, and the cause of death could never be determined. David’s wallet was found at the scene along with his rifle. Eight miles across rugged terrain without canines being able to pick up the scent seems extraordinary.

Montana

Missing Person Date Missing« Age* Sex

11/07/1896« Unk« M

11/21/1910« 23«M 11/15/26-

Alexis Bork Orville Tuttle 32-M 10/16/38« 24«M

John Houghland Clarence 10/08/48« 72«M 10/31/50«

Dorey H. B. Davis Mary 40«F 11/09/50« 62«M

Winkley Elmer Mikus James 10/19/51« 21«M 08/14/58«

Wishart Lawrence Eugene 20«M 10/27/58« 39«M

Prange Sam Adams Arthur 11/08/59« 59«M 11/14/60«

Dillon Jordan Fritz Frey 65«M 10/21/61« 27«M

Delmar Berg Timothy Shear 11/23/75« 22«M 02/13/83-

Tracy Cray Robert 4:00 p.m.« 26«M 09/19/2004«

Springfield Aaron Hedges 49«M 09/07/2014« 38«M

Alexis Bork

Missing: 11/07/1896, Flathead Mountains, MT

Age at disappearance: Unknown

Point of Separation

I could only find one article on this incident, a November 10, 1896, news brief in the New York Times. The article states that Alexis Bork was a preacher, and he had gone with a hunting party on November 5 to the Flathead Mountains outside of Troy, Montana. He went hunting with a group on a Thursday and returned to their camp, but he went out again alone on Saturday and did not return.

On Sunday a search team was organized to locate Reverend Bork. Here is what the article stated: “Several miles from the camp the searchers found blood on the snow and later came to a place where it was evident that a terrible struggle had taken place. A trail in the snow led some distance to a point where the body of the young minister was found mangled, torn and frozen. It was evident that Bork had been attacked and overcome by some animal, which afterward dragged the body to the spot where it was found.”

Summary

This is a highly unusual case because bears in Montana are hibernating by mid-November. It’s obvious from the article that the writers and sources in Montana had no idea what could have killed the preacher, and the article didn’t make any mention that he had been consumed.

Orville Tuttle

Missing: 11/21/1910- 4:00 p.m., McAllister, MT

Age at disappearance: 23 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Cluster* Hunter

In our second movie, Missing 411- The Hunted, we included the story of Aaron Hedges in Montana (In this chapter) that got separated from his hunting partners. After not hearing from their friend, they reported the disappearance to the sheri . Search and rescue personnel went deep into the wilderness and found the missing hunter's boots set together near a creek. SAR did a massive search and couldn't locate the person and eventually called o the mission. The missing person's skeleton was eventually found miles from where his boots were discovered, indicating he somehow crossed over 6 miles of snow boulder fields. Nothing about the story in the movie made any sense to the head of that search and rescue mission. The story I am about to present to you has eerie similarities to the Hedges story.

In early November of 1910, Whitehall, Montana resident, 23- year old Orville Tuttle had been in the mountains hunting elk. He had been waiting for the herd to come out of the high country near Yellowstone and move to the lower elevations. The big game hadn't moved, and Orville saw nothing. On October 21, 1910, Orville, his younger brother Rollie and his cousin Jack Morrison left their residence and traveled to the Upper Madison Valley in the area of Teepee Creek. Jack told authorities that Orville was a very experienced hunter and left camp early in the morning and was tracking an elk who was leaving a trail in the snow. Orville told his partners that he'd follow it for no more than an hour and then be back. The hunters waited until evening and Orville never made it back to camp. This December 12, 1910 article in the Butte Miner had these de-tails, "Early the next morning Jack Morrison, C.E. Morrison, Frank Morrison and Rollie Tuttle, the other members of the party began a search for their missing companion. They had no di iculty following his tracks to Teepee Creek and a distance of three miles along the creek. They found where he attempted to build a fire, but evidently, his matches were et., as the kindling had not lighted. His tracks led to the creek bank where they were lost. He had walked in the bed of the creek which at no point is more than ankle deep, to avoid deep snow, but they could find no tracks leading out of the creek, though they explored it up and down for several miles." The hunting group sent a member back to the city to get the sheri and additional support for their search. The formal search started on November 22 and increased in size as the days went by. On October we there was a significant development in the case as is stated in the October 20, 1911 article in the Billings Weekly Gazette, "Only one short glimpse was ever had of him (Orville), and even that may have been another hunter. H.F. Henningsen of Butte had joined the search and on the third day, towards evening, after the disappearance discovered a pair of shoes

beside a recent campfire. The snow had been scraped away and fuel brought from the drifts left by the blizzard. It was evident that the builder of the fire had he removed his shoes to thaw out his feet. Either the pain became so intense that he wandered away in delirium or he was unable to replace the shoes on his swollen feet. His tracks, made by bare feet were followed some distance in the gathering dusk by Mr. Henningsen. Finally, about 125 yards away, across a deep ravine, he espied the dim figure of a man making his way through the heavy timber. Henningsen called and fired several shots, but the man paid no heed and disappeared over the crest of the mountain. Darkness was coming on with a heavy fall of snow; Mr. Henningsen marked the spot and returned with some di iculty to camp. Next morning it was impossible to trace the path taken by the man seen the evening before." At the time Mr. Henningsen made his observation, there were hundreds of people combing the hillside looking for Orville.

The possibility that he happened to see another hunter seems highly improbable, everyone in that area would know about Orville and would be out of the area hunting or in the region searching. The fact the figure never stopped once shots were fired seems profoundly strange. If you are hunting and you hear shots go o nearby, I can guarantee you are going to stop and look to ensure they aren't firing at you. Since the figure crossed over a ridge and disappeared, the question has to be asked, where was it going? The SAR camp was at the bottom of the hill and in the opposite direction of the ridgetop.

The following spring, Mr. and Mrs. Tuttle vowed to bring their son home and enlisted dozens of friends and relatives. They scoured every inch of the area in which Orville, was lost, and they found nothing.

There were multiple massive searches for Orville, both in the snow and the following spring. They never found tracks in the snow after Orville's were lost in the creek, a very odd turn of events. The number of hunters that were involved in that initial e ort tells me that they thoroughly looked for tracks coming out of the creek, there was none. Where could he have gone? A hunter who removes his shoes because of frozen feet, the best way to attract attention and ask for assistance is to fire o three rounds from your rifle in rapid succession, the universal hunting call for help. There were a few people who claimed they heard two shots fired earlier in the SAR, this could not be confirmed.

This incident happened in a known cluster zone. The unique feature of this cluster, before the addition of this case, it was one of the very few

that was just women. Orville Tuttle was never found.

John Houghland

Missing: 11/15/26, Clinton, MT

Age at disappearance: 32 years

Weather* Canines* Point of Separation* Disability/Illness

When you work with historical disappearances, you also have to deal with a lack of information. Many times, articles from the early 1900s did not include the age of victims. I don't understand why they are stated in some events and not in others. In this incident, the age of the victim was not included in anything I found.

John B. Houghland was a World War veteran living in Clinton, Montana, twenty miles southeast of Missoula. The story starts with this November 19, 1926 edition of the Independent Record, "Houghland, in the company with two other men, departed Monday morning on a hunt for deer. A short distance from Clinton, they separated. At the appointed time the survivors met, but Houghland failed to show up. A search was instituted immediately."

The search for the war veteran was thorough and sophisticated. Deputy Sheri Tinkelpaugh of the Grant County Sheri 's Office took charge of the SAR. Searchers were challenged from the beginning as is described in this December 9, 1926 article in the Great Falls Tribune, "Heavy snow the first night he was missed obliterated all tracks, and although Bloodhounds were secured to trace him, no clue has been found." The search produced a dead deer that they thought John had killed. They also believed they had found tracks that might have been his. One week after the search started, the sheri stated that they believed the hunter would be found soon. They further said that they felt the missing man was in a cabin in Gilbert Gulch. Another hunter had reported seeing a hunter in the woods and thought it might have been Houghland.

The search soon took a one hundred and eighty-degree turn as is described in this November 23, 1926 article in the Anaconda Standard, "Mr. Tinklepaugh, with four others and Bloodhounds report no trace whatever of Houghland had been found, and it is conceded that he has perished. A detachment from Clinton will attempt today to locate the body. Deep snow, however, makes such a discovery unlikely, it is reported." The tracks that were reported days earlier were determined to be another sportsman that had been in the area.

Cold weather and deep snow ended the winter search for John Houghland.

On June 20, 1927, the search for Houghland was again on, with the focus being the timber just one mile from Clinton. Here are the headlines in the June 22, 1927 edition of the Billings Gazette, “Hounds Will be Used in E ort to Locate Missing Man’s Body.” Fifteen soldiers participated as ground teams looking through the wilderness. This search was coordinated by Theodore Shoemaker from the United States Forest Service. It covered eight square miles. They did find the remains of two hindquarters of a deer, nothing else. They believed the deer was a kill by Houghland. It was found on the lower ground, as though someone may have carried them downhill to that point. They thought that if someone had done this, they would’ve driven back to the scene after the snow dissipated and pick them up.

One of the last paragraphs I could find ever written about Mr. Houghland was this, located in the July 11, 1927 edition of the Missoulian, “One thing was revealed yesterday which was not known in Missoula before. That is Houghland was sickly and in no condition to be in the hills at the time. It also was learned that he was thinly clad.” This last statement just had me shaking my head. How could someone that was allegedly that sick vanish in an eight square mile region? How could someone that was that sickly climb mountain to get out of the search grids? This does not make any sense. If the war veteran wasn’t well, I doubt he could’ve carried a deer downhill to the flat lands and then disappear.

After an extensive archival search, I found this article about Houghland’s remains being located in the November 2, 1936 edition of the Missoulian, “The man’s bones were found by Roy Willis up the west fork of Nelson Creek while he was on a hunting trip.” Later in the same article was this, “Large search parties spent days in the hills searching for the man following his disappearance. Soldiers from Fort Missoula had been enlisted to search. Interested persons resumed the hunt for the man after the snows of spring had melted o , but it was not until 10 years after the disappearance that Roy Willis found the remains where the man had perished, evidently from exposure in the rugged mountains.” The finding of the remains leaves me more confused.

Clarence Dorey

Missing: 10/16/38, eight miles northeast of Florence, MT

Age at disappearance: 24 years

Point of Separation»

Fifteen miles south of Missoula lies the small town of Florence. It sits in a valley between two large mountain ranges. In early October 1938, Clarence Dorey resided in Florence with his pregnant wife.

On October 16, Clarence had traveled with his close friend from Florence to an area eight miles northeast of the city for deer hunting. This October 27, 1938, article in the Daily Interlaker explains what happened: “Dorey became separated from Alfred Buss of Florence, his hunting companion, while hunting deer the day after the season opened. Searchers followed his tracks for some distance the next day but they were lost when the snow melted.”

The story is a bit skewed. Clarence and Alfred went hunting and decided to split up. They agreed to be back at their vehicles that afternoon. Clarence never made it back. Alfred waited, yelled for his friend, and then drove back into town to get additional assistance. The o icial start of the search was October 17.

A November 7 article in the Independent Record stated that searchers were able to follow tracks down Swartz Creek to approximately one mile from the Missoula River and that Clarence was supposedly crawling at that point. This is confusing since the only large river in that area is now called the Bitterroot River. If this was the river he came to, Clarence should’ve known that all he had to do was follow the river south to the intersection with the road they drove in on. Many articles stated that Clarence went missing near Bitterroot Valley and Hell Gate Valleys. Crawling? How far can someone crawl until they are located?

The formal search for Clarence included woodsmen, foresters, neighbors, relatives, and law enforcement. There was a nine-day search that never found any of Clarence’s gear, shoes, or clothing. The hunter’s dad and uncle were on the scene every day of the e ort and searched extensively themselves. The search was terminated on October 26. A group of Northern Pacific Railroad employees were able to muster a one-hundred-dollar reward for the finding of Clar-ence’s body.

On December 14, Clarence’s wife had a baby boy at Daly Hospital in Hamilton. The article about the boy stated that Clarence was never found.

H. B. Davis

Missing: 10/08/48, Bitterroot National Forest, MT

Age at disappearance: 72 years

Point of Separation* Canines* Missing Clothing Mr. Davis was hunting with friends in the Moose Creek Primitive Area on October 8, 1948. The hunters agreed to meet late in the afternoon at a predetermined area and spend the night there. H. B. never arrived. Friends of H. B. left the mountains to summon assistance from national forest employees, and a search was started.

Almost from the very start of the e ort to find Mr. Davis, forestry o icials had already brought in specialized bloodhounds to assist in the e ort. By the third day of the search, the bloodhounds were supposedly on his scent and tracking. An article in the Times News on October 11, 1948, had the following: “Campfire ashes, a gun, top shirt and cap were found on a Pettibone Ridge hillside yesterday.” Anytime you’re searching and you find the missing person’s rifle, this is not a good sign. As I have chronicled in many of these missing persons stories, missing clothing is one of the consistent elements associated with the missing people. If we are to believe what the article states, Mr. Davis stripped himself of his shirt and cap, left his rifle, and vanished into the Bitterroot wilderness.

Two days after the Bloodhounds arrived, they left without finding Mr. Davis. The US Forest Service committed twenty-five parachutists to jump into the backcountry wilderness to search for the lost man; no news articles ever stated that he was found.

Summary

Mr. Davis disappeared in an area where many others have vanished over the years. Davis’s location is at the southern edge of the group but still in the same mountain range. One article stated that Mr. Davis appeared to be walking in circles; if that was the case, he should’ve been found quickly. It’s hard to imagine that a seventy- two-year-old man could travel far and not be found.

Mary Winkley

Missing: 10/31/50, Dillon, MT Age at disappearance: 40 years Point of Separation* Canines* Weather

It’s a rare day when I find two cases that occur in close geographical

and date proximity. The disappearance of Mary Wilkey and the case following this, Elmer Mikus, occurred just pine days and thirty miles apart. What is even more disturbing is that neither party was found in the years following.

Mrs. Mary Wilkey and her husband, W. E. Winkley, were residents of Beaverhead County. They drove across the county to her husband's hunting camp eighteen miles northwest of Dillon, Montana. Both were experienced hunters and knew the area extremely well.

On October 31, Mary left the camp to go hunting. Nobody in the camp can remember seeing her at the exact moment she left, and nobody remembers what direction she traveled. When she didn't return, the hunters and husband went into the field to start the search. After they couldn't find her that day, they went back to Dillon to summon the assistance of the Beaverhead County sheri .

,ii This area northwest of Dillon had more trees and ground cover than the area southwest of the city. The area that the camp was located was fairly rugged.

Beaverhead County sheri Paul Temple led the search for Mary. A November 5, 1950, article in the Butte Montana Standard had this detail: "A search started Thursday when Sheri Paul Tem-ple of Dillon, was notified that the woman left the camp of her husband, W. E. Winkley, on a deer hunting trip and had not returned, will be continued Sunday." He called in volunteer searchers and members of the community. Undersheri Brad Quick used his own plane for two days to fly the area of the search zone. George Talbott brought his pack of bloodhounds to the search site. George was the director of the Lost Persons Foundation from Deer River. It was reported that the bloodhounds had a di icult time picking up any scent because of two di erent snowstorms in the previous days.

As the days plotted on without any leads, talk by law enforcement centered on the theory that Mary might have been attacked by a moose or somehow injured in the woods. They didn't have any evidence to support this but floated the idea in the media.

The search continued until November 13 and was terminated for lack of evidence and bad weather. The sheri wouldn't admit it, but because they had two simultaneous missing person searches occurring, resources were no doubt strapped. Elmer Mikus vanished on November 9. The feeling of law enforcement may have been that since his was a relatively new disappearance, the chance of finding him

alive might be much higher than continuing on for someone missing almost two weeks.

One of the last articles I could find about Mary included the thoughts of the sheri about what may have happened. He stated that it was possible that Mary left the camp and decided to make the thirty-mile trek back to her home. This was an obscene and ridiculous statement considering the harsh conditions that existed at the time. It would appear that everyone involved was trying to come up with a cogent idea about what happened to the woman. It's relatively rare to find a lady in the 1950s that was hunting and extremely rare to find a case where one disappeared and wasn't found. I am positive that the Beaverhead County Sheri 's O ice was reeling at the end of November. They had two active missing persons cases within just miles of each other.

Elmer Mikus

Missing: 11/09/50, Dillon, MT Age at disappearance: 62 years Previously Searched* Unknown Cause of Death

This is a case that will touch many people's hearts. It's a story that teaches you to never give up hope that there will be closure.

This is incident number two in the greater Dillon, Montana, area in late October, early November of 1950. Dillon sits approximately forty miles south of Butte and twenty-five miles east of the Idaho border. If you travel west on Highway 278 approximately eight miles, just south is the small city of Bannock, and that is where Elmer Mikus liked to hunt.

Elmer was a sixty-year-old (sixty-two according to some sources) farmer that actually built his own log home in Dillon. On November 8, 1950, Elmer was hunting and sighted a huge buck in the Bannack area. This region has a small amount of thick greenery but is generally barren land with few areas of large ground cover. Elmer did track the deer and then lost it. He then went back to his home in Dillon.

Elmer was born and raised in the Dillon and Bannack area. His father was the local sheri in the 1880s, and his family was well known to the community. On November 9 Elmer awoke, did his chores, and told his wife that he had to go back for that buck. He asked his wife to take a day o work and travel with him. She tried and couldn't get the day o . It was as though he was summoned back to hunt again. He drove back to the area, telling his wife that he'd be back that night.

The night got later and later, and Elmer didn't come home. His wife called the local sheri and reported him as a missing person. Deputies went out and found the area where Mrs. Mikus had reported that her husband would go hunting. It was the same place he had hunted his entire life. A November 12, 1950, article in the Montana Standard had this about Elmer: "Mr. Mikus, a longtime resident of Dillon and son of a Bannack pioneer, was said to be an experienced hunter and woodsman and so familiar with the territory in which he was hunting that the possibility of his losing his way was not likely." This is what searchers were faced with. The person they were searching for probably knew the area better than anyone on the SAR team.

Sheri 's deputies put a plane in the air and eventually found Elmer's car in an area called "The Little Rockies," near Bon Accord on Grasshopper Creek. A November 14 article in the Montana Standard stated that trackers supposedly tracked Elmer for eighteen miles in a round loop that ended two miles from where they located his car, and they were lost in thinning snow. That's an unbelievable trek for a man that supposedly had heart problems. The formal search went on for at least a month and weeks after that informally. Friends and relatives went back into the area the following summer and searched again. Follow-up searches found nothing.

Fast-forward fifty-six years. Joanie Ross, Elmer's granddaughter, had spent time at his farm while he was building a log home for the family. In August 2006, Joanie received a call from the Beaverhead County coroner telling her that they believed they had found her grandfather.

Approximately two miles south of Bannack, in the middle of the area that Elmer had been hunting, Stephen Decker owns a mining claim. He called authorities when he found a human skull near a trail he was walking. The sheri sent men to the scene, and they searched the area and in turn called state authorities. An August 19, 2006, article by the Associated Press had the details of the find: "A team of investigators from the state archaeology department, along with Briggs and other o icials, went to the site and uncovered the rest of Mikus' remains near a tree. Mikus' bones were clad in weathered overalls, a leather jacket and rubber overshoes. A 30-30 caliber rifle was lying across them, along with 21 rounds of ammunition. A wristwatch and pocket watch also were recovered at the site." Later in the same article: "Briggs said the cause of death and manner of his death are unknown."

Take a walk to your computer now and look at a Google Maps photo of the region I just described. The sheri had a plane in the sky. It

would be very easy to see a body on the ground in any of the open area around where Elmer vanished. Once you exclude the area without ground cover, you would then focus your energy on the regions with trees. I have no doubt the sheri did this, and I'm sure the family followed up in the months and years that followed. He was found just two miles south of Bannack, right in the heart of the primary search zone.

I am extremely pleased that the family got closure on this event. Our organization has participated with NAMUS (the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System) on several missing person cases and has been responsible for identifying cases that were never entered into their system that are there now. NAMUS sends investigators to a relative's address to meet with them and obtain DNA for later comparison. It is the national organization that maintains a missing persons database with DNA for identification. When we originally started our project, we were surprised of the number of cases of missing people who were not in any database and were unknown by NAMUS. Many law enforcement agencies have a policy of destroying reports after five years. This includes missing people. Without a friend or relative keeping the case in front of investigators, calling them regularly, or asking for updates, that case will magically go away.

James Wishart

Missing: 10/19/51, Doris Ridge, MT

Age at disappearance: 21 years Geographical Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Weather* Unknown Cause of Death

The location of this disappearance is in an area of a geographical cluster of other missing men I have documented. The exact location is Doris Ridge approximately eight miles northeast of Evergreen and just south of Glacier National Park. This region is extremely rough and gorgeous. Just two miles east of the ridge is Hungry Horse Reservoir. In past books I have explained that areas with many small lakes have a high incidence of disappearance. This specific area has many small lakes high in altitude.

James and friends Robert Teets Jr., Robert Teets Sr., and Gary Thacker went into the Doris Ridge and South Fork area to hunt elk. An October 24, 1951, article in the Daily Interlaker had the description of how he vanished: “He was last seen Friday (10/19/51) by three members of his hunting party when he followed fresh elk tracks through the snow on Doris Ridge southwest from Hungry Horse Reservoir.” This left no doubt in the minds of searchers that he was lower in elevation. His friends did search the first day for James, and then snow started to fall heavy, and they went to get assistance.

Vern Green was the deputy sheri in Martin City and took control of the formal search. They were immediately hit by heavy snow that ran from eight inches to two feet. The US National Park Service and US Forest Service supplied resources to look for the hunter, along with volunteers from the surrounding cities.

Searchers set their main camp on the lower fork of the South Fork River. This was a spot as low as they could get in elevation and allowed them to see the mountainside if there was smoke from a fire. The searchers saw nothing. The formal search went on for eleven days until bad weather and no results made it an easy decision to terminate the e ort.

On May 20, 1952, the Teets family made it their mission to find their friend. The family walked up the side of Doris Ridge adjacent to a creek and saw something unusual. A May 21 article in the Daily Inter Laker had the following: “In a search yesterday the Teets family found clothing they believe to be that of the missing hunter. Young Teets was searching the area when he came across clothing in a creek bottom known to be that of the companion hunter. Before they could locate the body or search the area more thoroughly, a bear chased

them from the area." The pair rapidly left the area and looked for more assistance. A few days later, the sheri , coroner and a contingent of armed assistants made their way back into the creek. What they found was horrific.

Bears had scattered the remains of James over an area of sixty yards. They located his gun, which had the ejector removed, indicating to the sheri there had been an issue with the firearm. The sheri stated days later that they would never know the exact cause of Wishart's death. They stated that he was an experienced outdoorsman and hunter.

This is a very peculiar case. Anyone who had a basic knowledge of the region knew that all you had to do was walk downhill from the hillside and you'd run into Hungry Horse Reservoir. You'd follow the reservoir north and get back to the camp they had established at South Fork. This wasn't rocket science, and James had experience in the woods. What happened is a complete mystery. This is another instance where several articles made di ering statements about what was found and where it was found. The first article I found was the one quoted about the clothing in the creek. Other articles stated they found his clothes under a tree. There's a big di erence between those two stories. If the clothes were in the creek, the question comes to mind about how they ended up there. The sheri did say that the coroner determined that James wasn't shot and did not have broken bones. That's an interesting finding if his body was scattered over a wide area with bears chewing on him. How would they know that tissue that was eaten didn't have the bullet in it?

James was from Lasalle, Montana. He probably could've seen his house if he was standing on the highest ridge in the area. Like I stated, he knew the area very well. He was in an area where he would not have needed a compass; he could look down the hillside and see the reservoir. This is a true mystery.

Lawrence Eugene Prange

Missing: 08/14/58, Seeley Lake, MT

Age at disappearance: 20 years

Canines* Water

One of the oldest rules when visiting the great outdoors is to never hike alone. This is the rule that Lawrence Prange broke when he visited the area of Seeley Lake on August 10, 1958.

Lawrence was from Lake Villa, Illinois, and always enjoyed the camping and fishing. His interest in the outdoors led him to study to be a wildlife technician at the University of Montana at Missoula. Lawrence found an old wooden cabin behind the university that he made his home. His girlfriend, Susan Heck, was a fellow student. Lawrence enjoyed all parts of the wild, and that included hunting. The trip to the Seeley Lake region was intended to be a hunt for mountain goats. Lawrence had made a trip to this region before, and he would again take as his companion his German shepherd, Queen.

Lawrence entered the wilderness carrying a backpack with two rifles, and Queen carried her own backpack with supplies. The hunter was due out of the Mission Range on August 14, and he had agreed to contact his parents and girlfriend when he returned. He never made those calls. The alarm was sounded, and Mr. and Mrs. Prange headed for Montana. Sue Heck headed for the SAR command center.

Searchers utilized helicopters, men on horseback, specialty trackers, and even brought in canines in the hopes of luring out Prange's dog. After more than a month of searching, the SAR had found nothing. On September 20, an SAR team riding the range saw Queen running wildly through the brush. She was seen on the northwest side of Lindbergh Lake. The area around Lindbergh is very lush with thick vegetation. There is ample water in the area for all wildlife. Searchers could not get near Queen because she was too jumpy and nervous. The location where teams spotted the dog was more than three miles from the primary search location at Rocky Heights.

The SAR team returned to the base and asked Lawrence's girlfriend to accompany them in an attempt to retrieve Queen. Sue Heck was the only person who could get close to the canine. The dog eventually calmed down and followed the teams back to base camp. After a day of calming the nervous canine and feeding her, searchers took Queen to the top of one of the primary peaks they believed Lawrence had hunted. Queen wanted nothing to do with even being on the mountain and wanted to get out of the area. Searchers carefully examined Queen and did not find any wounds on her indicating that she had been in a fight with an animal. Lawrence's parents and his girlfriend were quite puzzled by the fact that Queen's backpack had been removed, as it was something that a human would have had to take o ; searchers never found this or any of Lawrence's equipment. Teams theorized that whatever happened to Lawrence must have occurred while he had his equipment on his back because they never found his campsite.

Summary

There is something about the general Seeley Lake region that doesn't bode well for hikers and hunters traveling alone. I've tracked dozens of cases in which hikers and hunters have died and the canine companion was sitting next to the corpse refusing to leave. This is one of a very few cases where the canine was running loose in the wild, and the hunter was never found. It almost seems as if Queen was deathly afraid of the circumstances surrounding Lawrence's disappearance and wanted nothing to do with whatever may have happened. Even if Lawrence was murdered, you'd expect the dog to go back to the corpse.

Lawrence may have been well armed, but as searchers, his girlfriend, and parents stated, both of his rifles were kept in his backpack. If the rifles were not readily available, Lawrence could have been jumped by something and never had a chance to defend himself.

Three miles east of where Queen was located is the timberline region, where you'd expect a goat or sheep hunter to set up camp. The area is dotted with dozens of small lakes, which makes this a very di icult area to search. Almost in the middle of this beauty is Lucifer Lake. With a name like that, I wouldn't like to camp there.

On September 24 the search for Lawrence was over. His parents went to his cabin in Pattee Canyon and collected his belongings. Sue Heck returned to the university and resumed her studies to become a wildlife technician. The Prange's went back to Illinois without ever knowing what happened to their son. Queen went back to Illinois with the Pranges. Oh, if only that dog could talk.

Sam Adams

Missing: 10/27/58, Chamberlain Mountains, southwest of Ovando, MT

Age at disappearance: 39 years

Point of Separation

Sam Adams was hunting in an area of the Chamberlain Mountains southwest of Ovando and approximately twenty miles southeast of Seeley Lake. Adams was hunting with two friends, Ed Hodges (age forty) and Calvin Trusty (age fifty-two), when they somehow got separated. On October 27, 1958, Adams was reported as missing. The area is extremely rugged with steep peaks and deep valleys. Searchers

interviewed Sam's wife, and she confirmed that he was armed with a rifle and pistol and had warm clothing, matches, and food.

Multiple private hunting parties called o their vacations to look for Sam. The Montana National Guard, the Powell County Sheri 's Department, and Montana Fish and Games all worked together in a grid pattern to find where the hunter may have established a camp. After seventeen days of intensive search e orts, nothing had been found.

Sam was hunting with dedicated friends, and they didn't give up their e orts to find their partner. Ed and Calvin took every possible weekend and traveled to the Chamberlain Mountains to search for their friend. On July 12, the e orts of Ed and Calvin paid dividends. A July 14,1959, article in the Deseret News had the following: "The party found Adams' rifle, smashed in three parts, his wallet, shoes, and tattered bits of clothing. They also found bear signs and remnants of half-digested clothing, human bones and hair. The shoes were scarred with teeth marks. Evidence of the battle was strewn in a 50-foot circle." Law enforcement forwarded the theory that Sam had wounded a bear. He used all but two bullets in the attempt to kill the creature and only injured it. In the same Deseret News article: "He apparently crawled alongside a log and tried to light a fire to get warm. He removed the shoelaces, probably to use as tourniquets. Then it appears he used his last two rounds to summon aid. The bear then reappeared and he used his gun as a club." Authorities then claim that the bear devoured Sam onsite or took part of the body to its den. How authorities could make all of these assumptions is truly remarkable.

I've spoken to several outdoorsmen about this story, and many question the logic behind the theory. How could anyone know the sequence of when Sam fired his rounds? Articles state that a special team was sent to investigate the scene, as it ba led those who originally found the carnage. All of the articles claim that the bear was enraged and that there was a wild battle. If the bear was enraged and there was an epic battle, it would be very doubtful that Sam had the opportunity to get three huge whacks at the bear with his rifle, subsequently breaking it into three pieces. If he had time to whack the bear, why not shoot it? Many could understand getting in one good whack, but then you'd probably be taken down by the bear and be in a hand-to-hand struggle, if that was the only weapon you had. A November 1, 1958, article in the Montana Standard ended with the following paragraph: "Trusty said Adams was warmly dressed, carried food and was armed with a pistol and rifle." Calvin was Sam's hunting partner and would've known what Sam was carrying. The theory

propagated by law enforcement specifically excluded the fact that Sam was carrying a pistol: a pistol that was left out of their explanation and a pistol that was never found after extensive searches at the scene. Authorities tried to explain away the fact that the vast majority of Sam was never found by claiming that a bear carried him to its den.

The last item that authorities tried to explain was why Sam's shoelaces were removed from his boots. The explanation forwarded was that the hunter used them as tourniquets. Again, authorities are grasping at a logical explanation, even though they have no rationale to put forward that explanation. They have no way of knowing if Sam was seriously injured before he was fatally injured, or if the bear took his life when he was attacked at his final location.

Summary

Readers must remember that Sam's friends had been searching for dozens of weekends and had been unable to locate him. It was almost seven months after he vanished that this location was found, in a heavily wooded area fifteen miles southwest of Ovando. One article did state searchers felt there were two di erent scenes, two hundred yards apart. Two of the articles stated that they found Sam's belt and socks, an interesting set of items to mention. The articles didn't say "sock"; they said "socks," indicating they found two. If they found Sam's belt and socks, how were both of them removed from his body without being devoured by a bear?

Authorities claim that Sam used his last two rifle rounds to summon assistance. Why wouldn't Sam have used his pistol to defend himself from the supposed bear? Why didn't searchers find Sam's pistol? Why would a hunter that had presumably been attacked by a bear—a bear that could come back for a final kill—use his last two rounds to shoot into the air?

I, along with other hunters, have tried to understand how you can break a rifle into three di erent pieces; it wouldn't be an easy task under any conditions, let alone during a fight with a bear. The remnants of what was found of Sam were described as "scant remains." If this was all they found of Sam, you wouldn't expect to find his belt, hat, shoes, billfold, socks, and knife. Oh yes, the knife—what about Sam utilizing the knife as a weapon in a struggle for life?

The location where Sam was eventually found was only a mile and a half from the point where the main search had been centered in November. This seems like a very short distance to maintain a search

for seven months. My question, if searchers found some of his remains near camp, how did he travel any distance? The story describing the body was very unclear.

I don't fault law enforcement for trying to explain away a complicated situation. Communities expect law enforcement agencies to always have the ability to explain anything; that's the comforting aspect of local government making the community feel as though everything is under control. It isn't until you start to review cases from throughout the United States that specific patterns in unique cases start to make themselves known.

I do believe that Sam Adams was probably consumed at some point by a bear, as bear remains were found in the area. There are too many unanswered questions, however, to put this story into a tight little box and put it away. Could a bear have killed Sam? Why wasn't it stated that human remains or clothing was found in bear scat? Probably because they weren't. Where is Sam's pistol?

Arthur Dillon Jordan

Missing: 11/08/59, Seeley Lake, MT

Age at disappearance: 59 years

Weather*

On October 23, 1959, Arthur Jordan left the Teepee Lodge just east of Kalispell, Montana, and headed for Seeley Lake for a month of elk hunting. Arthur was a conscientious husband and called his wife regularly. The couple talked about the hunting and when his wife should expect another call. That next call never came, and his wife reported Arthur missing on November 8, 1959.

Snow had hammered the Seeley Lake area just prior to November 8, and it toppled phone lines in the area. The Missoula County Sheri 's O ice sent twenty-six men into the Seeley Lake area to search for Arthur, even though weather and ground conditions were treacherous. After two weeks of extensive searching, deputies located Arthur's pickup and camp. Inside the pickup they found his .30-06 rifle and a hunting jacket. A November 25, 1959, article in the Daily Interlake stated, "Thirty-four searchers tracked through the snow-covered Seeley Lake country. They found remains of an elk with one quarter missing." A follow-up article written April 12, 1960, stated, "Jordan's camp was found intact last fall with guns, clothes, ammunition, and a freshly butchered elk."

After several starts and stops and an additional spring search, Arthur Jordan was never found.

Summary What can we surmise from this story? Something serious happened to Arthur Jordan. Grizzly bears are hibernating during the month of November. If they did attack Arthur, there would have been a bloody scene, which was never found. Arthur did not leave the confines of camp voluntarily, or he would have taken his coat and rifle. (Both were found in his truck.) The real question is, what happened to the quarter of elk that was missing from the camp? Did whoever take Arthur take the elk? Why would someone take a quarter of the elk? Why not take the entire animal? If someone was bold enough to take an elk and Arthur, why not take his valuables? Whoever or whatever took Arthur had to have an unbelievable ability to survive in the wild, as conditions at the time were treacherous.

I did contact Missoula County sheri Carl Ibsen. Sheri Ibsen was extremely interested in tracking down the reports related to this incident and gave the case to a sergeant. After several e-mail exchanges, the sergeant was unable to locate the Missoula County sheri 's reports in the incident.

Fritz Frey

Missing: 11/14/60, Lolo, MT

Age at disappearance: 65 years

Weather

Fritz Frey was a Missoula rancher who enjoyed the outdoors, specifically hunting. On November 14, 1960, Fritz went to the Petty Creek Wilderness and Johns Creek on a hunting excursion. The elevation in the area is between 4,000 and 5,200 feet. Supposedly, Fritz was last seen on the West Fork of Petty Creek, but some believe he may have gone to the Johns Creek area. The Petty Creek Wilderness is approximately twenty miles west of Missoula.

A large search party led by Missoula County sheri William Walker spent several days searching various drainages but failed to find any clues. Search e orts were continually hampered by snow flurries that hit the area when Fritz disappeared.

In June 1961, Sheri Walker again formed a search team of nearly one hundred people and scoured the area where Fritz disappeared. Professional trackers, smoke jumpers from the federal fire service, and

law enforcement professionals all participated in the weekend search but again failed to find any trace of Fritz.

Fritz was never found.

Delmar Berg

Missing: 10/21/61, Absaroka Mountains, MT

Age at disappearance: 21 years

Weather* Point of Separation* hunter

October 21, 1961, was not a good day for hunters in the northwestern part of the United States, two hunters disappeared. Both of the victims were healthy, active young men. They vanished in states that adjoin each other, Idaho and Montana. The distance between the incidents, two hundred miles. Considering that there were thousands of hunters in the woods in almost every state and province in North America, the only two cases on this date in the disappearance of Fred Dorsey from Idaho (refer to the Idaho section for this story) and Delmar Berg from Montana, the locations are very close to the same longitudinal line, quite a coincidence.

In October of 1961, twenty-seven-year-old Delmar Berg was a successful assistant manager of a finance company in Billings, Montana. He was married to his pregnant wife and excited about soon becoming a father. He loved the outdoors and enjoyed hunting the area south of Livingston.

On Saturday, October 21, 1961, Delmar and friends Phil Ness, George Shuman and Bruce Bowman were hunting the area of the South Fork of Six Mile Creek in the Absaroka Mountains thirty miles south of Livingston. The region is very rugged with steep mountains and excellent hunting. At 8:00 a.m. the morning of the 21st, Delmar got separated from the group. Later that same morning, the group heard a series of five shots in relatively rapid succession, a very odd thing to hear from another hunter. The group eventually made it back to their camp and could not locate Delmar. They searched until nightfall and still could not find their friend. At midnight, Bruce Bowman drove into Livingston and contacted the sheri to report his friend as missing.

The search for Delmar started the morning of October 22 when the sheri and local game warden arrived at the hunting camp and began to look through the woods. The October 24, 1961 edition of the Missoulian had these details of the SAR, “A search for Delmar Berg, 25

(age varies according to articles), Billings, missing on a hunting trip since Saturday, was called o Monday night until the weather improves. Albert Nickerson, Park County Sheri , said ten inches of snow had blown into drifts four and five feet deep."

The search for Delmar was a roller coaster ride based on weather conditions. It was eventually terminated November 8 after the snow got too thick to travel through. Hundreds of farmers and area ranchers had assisted in the e ort to locate the lost hunter, and nobody had found anything. They attempted to locate the person that fired the five rounds heard by Delmar's hunting companions; they never determined who the person might be. It was later believed the individual firing the round had to be Delmar.

All of Delmar's friends stayed and searched for their friend during all facets of the SAR. Nobody found any of the hunter's property and tracks were never located.

Delmar was a very experienced outdoorsman and hunter. I tried to think through all of the scenarios that would force a big game hunter to fire five rounds in rapid succession, and I can't rationally think of a logical answer. If he were shooting at an elk, the animal would be spooked after the first shot, and it would run. You might get another shot at it before it disappeared into the trees. If he shot and wounded the animal and put it down, he might fire one or two additional rounds to kill it. If he had wounded the animal and out it down, searchers would've located it, and they didn't.

Delmar Berg was never found.

Timothy Shear

Missing: 11/23/75, Little Bell Mountains, MT

Age at disappearance: 22 years

Weather» Canines» Missing Clothing The Little Bell Mountains are located almost in the geographical center of Montana, approximately one hundred miles north of Bozeman. The mountains reach elevations nearing nine thousand feet and are located in the Lewis and Clarke National Forest. These are rugged and wild mountains and known for excellent hunting.

On November 23, 1975, US postal worker Timothy Shear went hunting in the area near the boundary lines of Meagher and Judith Basin Counties. Timothy didn't come out of the mountains, and his

friends notified law enforcement. The first two days focused on Meagher County, and it then switched to Judith Basin County because a hunter was found who claimed to have spoken with Timothy on November 23.

Searchers did find some interesting pieces of possible evidence. They first located an orange hunting vest hanging in a tree, the same type Timothy wore. What is interesting about this is that it matches what was found during the search for Jimmy Rambone in Quebec (See Quebec Section). Searchers also located a lean-to shelter that appeared to have been recently made. In several of the searches for missing people, ground teams have located these in the areas where the person vanished.

Bloodhounds and helicopters from Malmstrom Air Force Base were used in an attempt to locate Tim. Two days after he vanished, a severe snowstorm hit the area and dropped two feet of snow, inhibiting search e orts.

Air and ground searchers failed to find any tracks or campfires that may have been made by Timothy. Bloodhounds failed to pick up Tim's scent at any location.

The best I could determine, Timothy Shear was never found.

Tracy Cray Missing: 02/13/83- 4:00 p.m., Little Trail Creek, Gardiner, MT

Age at disappearance: 26

Weather* Canines* Point of Separation

This incident could've happened in Wyoming or Montana based on the location. Specifically, it happened just east of Gardiner Montana on Little Trail Creek. I have consistently stated that elk hunter has a higher rate of disappearing and not being found that just about any other type of hunting, this mysterious case adds another.

In 1980, the Cray family moved from San Diego to Gardiner, Montana. Les Cray had taught his boys how to hunt and had them in the woods at a young age teaching them the proper way to manage safety, stalk game and respect wildlife.

In February of 1983, Tracy Cray was a twenty-six-year-old married man with two kids. Tracy and his wife Marsha were tight with Tracy's parents, and they were all members of the Mormon Church. Tracy was considered by the family to be an outstanding hunter, knew the realities of being in the woods and was a very smart outdoorsman.

On Sunday, February 13, 1983, the Cray family had late season elk tags and decided to head into the wilderness and see if they could fill them. Tracy, his dad Les and his brother Les III, all drove to the Little Trail Creek Trailhead east of Gardiner. The trio walked three-quarters of a mile up a snow packed trail until they reached a pine tree and decided to sit down. They each ate a snack when Tracy stood up and told the group he was going a bit higher up Niggerhead Mountain (yes, this was the name in multiple articles) the mountain and he wouldn't be long. Les and Les III decided to turn around and went down the trail.

As the afternoon sun started to disappear, Les started to worry- When there was total darkness, he was scared. The family told reporters that, "Tracy was born to hunt." They followed that with everyone believed he was a mountain goat and nobody could lose him on the trail.

After firing multiple rounds in the air, hiking the trail numerous times and calling Tracy's name, Les made the call to the Park County Sheri 's o ice and advised them that his son was missing.

Almost from the beginning, the Cray's church ward sent dozens of members to the trailhead to help with the SAR. A helicopter from Utah responded., the National park Service sent eight rangers, deputies from throughout the area combed the countryside. Everyone

believed this was going to be a quick search because the area wasn't complicated or threatening. The one item that threatened the SAR from the beginning was explained in the November 9, 1987, edition of the Montana Standard, "When Tracy didn't return by 10 pm., his family notified authorities. But that night it snowed, and the wind blew, wiping out any tracks that might have been found. Search e orts the next day failed to find any trace of Cray, and the next few days weather grew worse."

The SAR was called o two times because of weather-related issues in the first two weeks. Searchers were not that concerned about the weather because Tracy knew the outdoors. He was wearing a blaze orange vest over a warm coat, cotton pants, long underwear, red gaiters, brown rabbit fur gloves, and moon boots. Everyone believed that the orange vest would be easy to spot, especially from the air, but apparently, it was not. The hunter was carrying his rifle and a camera, items that would be unique to the environment. The Park County Sheri had multiple airplanes in the air from the Civil Air Patrol, at one point they had called in over twenty dog teams to pick up a scent. At one point the search had been stopped multiple times, then o icially closed down after two weeks only to be started again by volunteers and church members. This April 23, 1983 edition of the Billings Gazette had details about the canines, "Searchers on foot and in aircraft have found no trace of Cray, and tracking dogs failed to pick up a scent."

There were additional searches through the summer months, all with monumental resources, nothing was found. There were weekends in the summer of 1983 where 45-50 men who were members of the Cray's church that spent their entire weekend looking for Tracy. Nothing was ever located that indicated he was in that area. At one point, Les Cray purchased a mule so that it would carry supplies deep into the backcountry. I'm always amazed at the commitment a family has to finding their loved ones; I think it's in our DNA that we can't give up.

In September of 1983, Marsha Cray o ered a $5000 reward to anyone who could prove that her husband was deceased. She and her two kids couldn't get social security benefits and were without an income, and if there was no proof that Tracy was dead, they couldn't get a death certificate to get the needed family benefits. Nothing was found.

In 1984, a Montana judge issued the Cray family a death certificate based on the multitude of searches and opinion of the sheri , Tracy Cray was deceased.

I found several articles written after Tracy vanished that reflected the opinion of family members about what might have happened. This July 1,1983 edition of the Billings Gazette had these statements from Mrs. Cray, “Anything is possible,” she said. “We’ve even considered a UFO.” There have been stories about unidentified flying objects picking up people, so there is a possibility this occurred in Tracy’s case, she said. Perhaps Tracy struck his head in a fall and walked out of the wilderness with amnesia, Mrs. Cray said.”

If there was ever a case that should absolutely ba le readers, this is it. Five years after Tracy vanished there were articles in the Montana papers talking about the mysterious nature of the case. With the hundreds of hikers and hunters that trampled that valley over the years, someone should’ve spotted the remains. Belt buckles, rifle, camera, these items will stay in the environment for decades.

The family did field its share of calls from psychics. I am always very skeptical of people calling victims’ families, I know of too many incidents where some of them are vultures asking for money (this happened in the Atadero case). There was one psychic that the family described that gave them information which was almost like a riddle. They were told that if Tracy could stand up, he would interfere with a microwave repeater (these are on many mountain tops). They claimed that he was overlooking a valley on the southwest side of the mountain. Volunteers spend days checking all of these leads; they led to nothing.

The Park County Sheri was interviewed a multitude of times about this incident and never had a good explanation as to why nothing has been located. I can tell you that in this disappearance, the sheri threw everything at that mountain trying to get it to reveal where Tracy was located. I counted over 45 search days that involved government authorities, that is a lot. There were probably over 90 SAR days when you consider friends relatives and church members.

Articles years after this event stated that the Cray family still made regular treks up the mountain looking for some remnants of their son.

Robert “Bugsy” Springfield

Missing: 09/19/2004, Bighorn Mountains, MT

Age at disappearance: 49 years

Disability/ Illness« Point of Separation« Canines« Previously Searched

The Crow Indian Reservation is located in the southeastern section of Montana. The reservation is in the Bighorn Mountains, a very steep and rough area known for its big game and big mountains.

On September 19, 2004, Robert Springfield and his son, Colton (age thirteen), and his adopted son, Brent Brooks, went to Black Canyon to hunt elk. Robert was wearing heavy winter clothing and was armed with a bow and arrows. The two kids were assisting Robert by attempting to herd the elk down the valley.

Robert was unemployed in 2004 because of an injury sustained on an oil well. The Springfield's were living in Casper, Wyoming, and made the trip to the Bighorns specifically for the hunting. Robert and his family were members of the Crow Nation Indian Reservation, and they were hunting on ground owned by the tribe.

Late in the afternoon on September 19, after hunting, Robert did not come back to the prearranged spot where he had agreed to meet his two sons. The kids waited until after dark and still had not seen their dad. The boys notified authorities, and a search began. The Bighorn County Sheri 's O ice and members of the tribe searched the area where Robert was thought to be but found nothing. A FLIR- equipped helicopter was brought into the valley and did low flyovers in an e ort to locate Robert. The area had many steep canyons with dense foliage and many caves. Robert was not found. The family made several trips to the area and searched by themselves but still could not locate Robert. The Bureau of Indian A airs (BIA) and county sheri also brought in canines and searchers on horseback but found nothing.

In October 2005 a hunter was in the Black Canyon area and heard a crow screeching. The bird was loud and was incessantly screeching even in the presence of the hunter. The hunter walked to the tree where the crow was sitting. Below the tree lay human remains.

The hunter led authorities to the scene and later told news teams that he found a partial skull, a femur, and a neatly rolled-up men's belt next to the skull. Two boots neatly sat next to the skull and femur. There was a men's coat on the ground that had a small tear in the back, and a wallet was found that contained money. The only items that were missing were Robert's bow and arrows.

The Bighorn County sheri and the BIA were brought to the scene and decided the FBI should be summoned. The FBI came to the scene and took possession of the body parts. The remains were sent to the FBI identification section in Quantico, Virginia.

Veronica Springfield, Robert's wife, was given conflicting information about her husband's cause of death. She said she was originally told that he could have been shot, but that was later recanted when she was told that a tree might have fallen on him.

Veronica also stated that the location where her husband's body parts were found was directly above the camp where much of the search e orts were centered. She couldn't believe the body parts were there when the search was being conducted because she believes searchers would have found her husband.

Two years after Robert's body parts were recovered, the FBI still retained the remains. The FBI stated that they had to put Robert's DNA in a federal database and that they were backlogged and couldn't ship the body parts until it was completed. The family later filed a federal lawsuit against the FBI. On March 3, 2009, the Tulsa Native American Times ran an article about the plight of the Springfield's and their e orts to get Robert's body home. The article stated the following about the lawsuit: "The complaint also alleges Springfield died under suspicious circumstances and that the FBI failed to investigate his disappearance. After the body was found, the FBI failed to investigate to positively identify the remains in a timely manner even though there was compelling evidence for the identification, the complaint said."

Summary

I'm at least pleased that someone somewhere realized that Robert's death was suspicious and unusual and should have been investigated. Robert's case is another in a long line of cases described in this book that have a very unusual conclusion. Only a partial skull and femur were found: where are the rest of his bones? His belt was found "neatly" rolled up next to the bones. Who did that? His boots were stacked neatly next to the bones. Who placed them there? How did Robert get the tear in the back of his jacket? Where are his bow and arrows?

If someone came across a bow and arrows lying next to bones, maybe they would steal the weapon. But you'd think they would also call authorities and allow the family to recover the remains. If someone were going to steal the bow and arrows, you'd think they would also empty his wallet of cash.

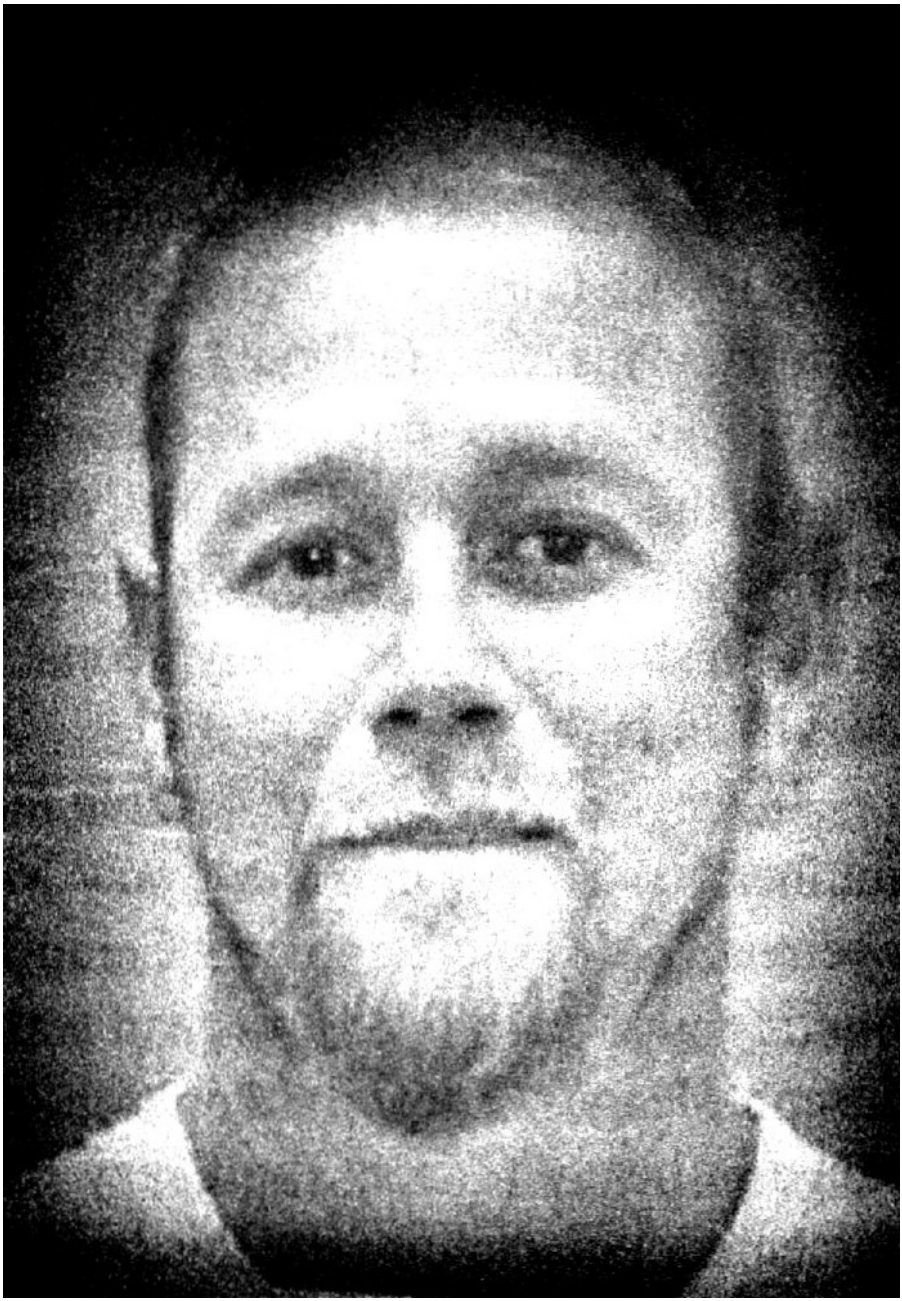
This is also one of many cases in which the remains were found in an area that had been previously searched. The remains were found so

close to the SAR command post that the family believes they would have found the body. One law enforcement source stated that Robert may have died because a tree fell on him. If that's true, who rolled his belt and stacked his boots?

A continuing theme that cannot be easily explained regarding many of the bodies recovered across North America is the absence of large bones.

I've asked several law enforcement friends why the FBI kept Robert's body for two years. Nobody has given me a cogent explanation. The BIA and Bighorn County Sheri 's O ice obviously felt something very unusual happened, because they called for FBI assistance. The reality of what happened to Robert Springfield will probably never be known. This is another case where the FBI took an unusual interest without a good explanation. I have documented many cases of missing people in the wilderness where the FBI arrives, nobody called, doesn't help in the investigation and just monitors what is happening. It appears as though the agency knows something unusual is happening and they are trying to understand,

It has to be noted as highly unusual that a screeching crow is what led a hunter to Robert's remains.



Aaron Hedges

Missing: 09/07/2014, Crazy Mountains, MT Age at disappearance: 38 years

Weather* Missing Clothing* Canines* Previously Searched* Boulders

This is one story that you will not forget. It is a story that took me several weeks to wrap my mind around. When I initially researched it, I thought maybe there was some unusual foul play at work. After I slept on it for several nights, conducted more research, traveled to Montana and saw the topography, and understood the distances related to the evidence, I was dumbfounded.

In Missing 411: The Devil's in the Detail, I supply two charts that are a cumulative set of data on two relevant facts. One table deals with distances that people travel. In the four books I had written about missing people, there were extreme examples of the phenomenal distances people allegedly traveled. In one instance facts show that a twenty-two-month-old girl went fifteen miles in three days. A report of the disappearance of a three-year-old boy stated that he traveled fifteen miles in thirty hours. The list is extensive. I placed it there to show that the distances from point to point were correct and validated by law enforcement or search-and-rescue. The reality is that these people went missing in wilderness areas, and any parent knows that it is impossible for a child of these ages to travel those distances in the time frames reported. I have no idea how the people went those distances, and I do not claim what may have happened. In the story, you are about to read, again distances come into play.

As you read about hunting cases, you will start to see that bow hunters have a high mortality rate and have the highest rate of not being found. If they are found, the stories are almost beyond understanding. This story is about a bow hunter.

The location of this case is ten miles north of Big Timber, Montana, in the Crazy Mountains. Yes, the name of the range is the Crazy Mountains. I've discussed in past books that people disappear in areas with strange names. Many people have vanished in regions with "devil" in in the title, weird.

In early September 2014, three men took the Cottonwood Lake trailhead and went into the Crazy Mountains for elk hunting and eventually put their camp near Campfire Lake. Two of the men were hunting with rifles, and one man was hunting with a bow—Aaron Joseph Hedges. The trail starts on the west side of the mountain range in heavy timber. The Crazy Mountains have a split law enforcement jurisdiction, and this trail started in Park County.

It was during the trip into the Crazy's that the hunting group had their first major disaster. They had two horses and one mule to carry their supplies and were crossing one of the high passes when for some

reason the mule (carrying Hedges supplies) spooked. It took o , and Aaron lost some of his supplies. It took hours to gather up essential items that fell and to re-organize the packs.

The three hunters were carrying radios for communication. On September 7, 2014, Aaron said he was going to get supplies cached at another lake and split o from his friends. In the late afternoon, he radioed his buddies and stated that he'd missed the trail back to their location and was instead going to go on to Sunlight Lake. He knew the site because they had hunted it last year and kept a stash of supplies in the mountains surrounding the lake. He knew a sleeping bag and other items were there, which he needed. He was going to grab those items and be back later in the evening. The friends didn't think much of it and said that they'd see him that night. He never arrived. Hedges was an extremely experienced hunter and had been in this area many times; nobody was concerned at this point. The following day (Monday), Aaron still hadn't made it back to the camp. His friends didn't have a major concern for his safety because they knew he had supplies, was very experienced and was heavily armed. They went elk hunting and thought they'd see him that night. They did kill an elk and brought it back to camp. When Aaron didn't arrive on Monday night, the friends were concerned. This area of the mountains doesn't have much cell reception and is miles from the nearest phone and a day ride back to their vehicles. They did attempt to raise Aaron on his radio, and there was no response. The weather at this point was pleasant, in the high forties and low fifties.

The friends looked for Aaron throughout the day and Tuesday night. They could not locate their friend and decided they needed to summon assistance.

On Wednesday the hunters made it out of the mountains and called Aaron's wife and reported him as missing. She, in turn, called the sheri , who began to formulate search-and-rescue plans.

I can tell you that the delay in notifying law enforcement of the disappearance did concern some people, and the press printed it. The sheri 's spokesman said that they believed that Aaron's friends did search for him and were diligent in that e ort. They did not think that they were involved in any foul play.

It's crucial at this point to understand the geographical significance of what happens. The men took the Cottonwood Lake trail- head, which is located on the western side of the Crazy Mountains near the southwest corner of the range. The west side of the mountains is in

Park County. The eastern side of the mountains belongs to Sweet Grass County. Initial reports said that Aaron was lost in Park County, and they took charge of the search. Aaron lived in Sweet Grass County, and his wife contacted them first, and they referred the incident to Park County. Another delay to the start of the SAR mission added to the timing issues. Park County Sheri Scott Hamilton took the reins of the search. An October 3, 2015, article in the Montana Pioneer had this statement about what SAR was faced with: “By the time we were notified and were able to spin up, the weather had hit, Hamilton recalled. So, we’re dealing with two feet of snow in the mountains. The continuing storm made air searching di icult for the first day or two- actually impossible.” It’s important to understand the timeline. There was a three-day delay in the initial report of the disappearance, and then an additional two-day delay before the SAR mission even starting. At this point, Aaron had been missing for five days, and there wasn’t an organized e ort in the field looking for him.

Sheri Hamilton pulled every string he could to locate the hunter. He looked at a map and realized there was a decent likelihood that Aaron was on the border with Sweet Grass County, and he requested their assistance. Park County SAR would come into the mountains from the west, and Sweet Grass would enter from the east. It was approximately two days after the search was started that a group was working Sweet Grass Creek, the creek that empties out of Sunlight Lake. A September 29, 2014, article in the Livingston Enterprise documented an exciting find: “About two weeks ago, search teams located evidence that has since been positively identified as gear belonging to Hedges. Rescue workers found a pair of boots, a Camelback bladder, a water filter, a fire spot and a woodpile near a creek. ‘Barefoot, you’re not going to go very far, so I made a quarter mile circle around where the boots were found and divided into three separate areas,’ said Alan Ronneberg, the Sweet Grass County Search and Rescue Coordinator.” The searchers went on to say that a tube that connected to the bladder had been removed and not torn o . They believed that Aaron had used that to get water out of the creek.

I was extremely fortunate to spend two days with Sweet Grass County Sheri and SAR coordinator Alan Ronneberg. We sat in his o ice, put a map of the Crazy Mountains on the table and Alan explained the strangeness of the case. He said that by the time his SAR personnel got into the mountains and found Aaron’s shoes and supplies, there were two feet of snow on the ground. They located evidence that someone (probably Aaron) tried to start a fire and were dumbfounded when they located the hunter’s boots. He stated that they didn’t find any tracks leaving the area near Sweet Grass Creek where the supplies

were found even though there was snow on the ground. There were also now tracks seen as the searchers hiked west up the trail to where the supplies were discovered. He reinforced that the area was rugged, lots of shale, a place where nobody would want to walk in bare feet. After being around Sheri Ronneberg a few hours, he stated that there was another highly unusual fact about finding Aaron's supplies. He said his team was in that exact area, in the same spot two days earlier and never saw the supplies. I asked him how that was possible, he said, "I don't know." There was a slight implication that maybe they weren't there when his SAR group had first arrived.

In past books, I have documented multiple incidents where victims removed their shoes. Sometimes the removal happened very quickly after they vanished, much too fast for hypothermia to be the explanation. In a few instances, the victims also removed clothing, except they were too young to have ever taken their clothes o and their parents demanded to know how it had happened. The statement made by SAR that Aaron could not have traveled far after removing his shoes was logical, but after reading my books, you will quickly find that logic doesn't come into play in these stories.

Remember that it had snowed two feet over the previous days. It was extremely cold. If a severe case of hypothermia had hit Aaron and he had removed his shoes and attempted to hike, it is rational to say that he wouldn't have gotten more than a few miles in the extremely rugged and dangerous landscape in the Crazy Mountains.

Sheri Hamilton had accumulated and dispatched an unbelievable set of resources to look for Aaron. Twenty dog teams never found his scent. Seven equestrian teams found nothing. Fifty-nine ground searchers did find his boots and water bladder. The National Guard and a private helicopter with night vision equipment and high-powered spotlights combed the mountains for days and found nothing. If Aaron were moving through any open areas, he'd look like a snow plow from the air walking through fresh snow. Nothing along the lines of tracks was ever found. Fifteen days after Aaron was last heard from, the formal search was terminated on September 22.

Nine months after Aaron vanished, there was a break in the case. Roger Beslanowitch was a butcher from Powell, Wyoming, who came to the Anchor Ranch in Sweet Grass County to do work with his son-in-law. An October 3, 2015, article in the Montana Pioneer describes what happened: "'My son-in-law was going to fix some fence and it was kind of steep, so I dropped him o at the top,' Beslanowitch recalled referring to the rancher Charlie Rein. 'It was going to take a

while for him to get done fixing the fence, so I had some time to kill. He told me if I wanted to look at a beautiful view, to go on top of a ridge above, and I did.' After taking in the vista, Beslanowitch decided to take a short cut through a stand of timber. That's when he spotted an orange hunting vest, as well as a backpack and clothing." He initially feared "a bear got somebody.. .'My first thought when I saw clothes piled up against a tree, I just knew there was going to be a body there.'" He had found a bow, backpack, socks, shirt, and a vest. He didn't know what he had found, but he gathered it up and took it back to the ranch and called the sheri . It wasn't long before the items were identified as belonging to Aaron.

I met with Charlie Rein at his ranch, a beautiful location in the Crazy Mountains. Charlie and his wife explained in detail how Aaron's items were located. Charlie did say that it was on a hillside in a position where you could see their home. He stated they found a thermos sitting on a rock, as though someone had been sitting and looking at their valley. The backpack and bow were propped up under a tree and was searched, and they knew immediately it was Aarons. One item that was in the backpack that was never in any publication, a pistol, a forty-four caliber Ruger Redhawk, loaded. Aaron could've fired o shots to alarm others of his position, something he never did. Charlie stated that the entire scenario that was unfolding didn't make any sense. The Sweet Grass County Sheri was again called.

I was fortunate to get Sheri Ronneburg from Sweet Grass County to get into one of the helicopters used in the search to show me by air the path that Aaron might have taken. It is one of the most beautiful areas anyone can imagine. As we flew the Sweet Grass Creek area, we saw herds of elk and a pristine environment. The sheri reiterated the impossibility that Aaron could've traveled the path that his boots, bow, and backpack indicate. We landed the helicopter on a plot of land across from where the backpack was located. You could easily see the Rein ranch house and Sweet Grass Creek from Aaron's last location. The sheri told me that when his men hiked in to recover the supplies, they searched the area extensively and found no additional evidence. One year after finding the supplies, a group of guests at a nearby dude ranch were on horseback and saw what they believed to be a human skull, they called the sheri . Arron's remains were located not far from the bow. There wasn't much left other than scattered skeletal remains. I asked the sheri if they found socks, Ronneberg said, No, we didn't find any feet." You read that correctly, no feet. When asked why his men didn't find the remains when they searched the area when they recovered the backpack, bow, and thermos, he stated he didn't have a good answer, but that it didn't make sense.

At this point, any concern about Aaron su ering hypothermia and taking o his boots doesn't add up. He had clothing, lots of clothing that would've kept him warm. There was one huge issue. The same article I quoted earlier stated that for Aaron to get to the location at the ranch, he would've made a cross-country hike for six miles in snow. He didn't have skis or snowshoes, and he would've been o the trail. Oh, don't forget: he had to have done this in bare feet.

The location where Aaron's bow and backpack were found was one mile from the ranch house. There had been an extensive search in the area where the items were found, and Aaron wasn't there. Searchers were completely in disbelief. It was beyond comprehension how he could've made it from the creek to the location where his items were found without boots. Remember the first statement from the SAR worker; Aaron couldn't have gone far from the point he found the boots. I can only imagine what the searcher is thinking now.

I plotted the distance from the location where Aaron's boots were located next to Sweet Grass Creek and where his body was found on the Rein Ranch. Point to point I have it at six air miles.

Remember, nobody walks air miles in the mountains. In the Crazy Mountains, you could easily double that mileage.

There have been many articles written about this event, and all leave the reader mystified about what might have occurred. Corporal Greg Todd is the head of Park County SAR for the sheri 's department and was asked what he thinks happened to Aaron; he called it a "million-dollar mystery." I'll leave you with this last statement from Sheri Alan Ronneburg with the Sweet Grass County Sheri 's Department and documented in the October 3, 2015, article in the Montana Pioneer that addresses what might have happened: '"You think of it, and it's a theory,' Ronneberg said. 'Everything from he got turned around just o the trail, got caught in the storm and passed away from hypothermia, to he's in Mexico somewhere, to UFO's got him. There is literally a full list—a legal page—of theories out there.'" It wasn't long after this statement was made that Aaron's remains were located.

This is one of the stories we highlighted in our movie, Missing 411-The Hunted. I encourage you to watch it for the pure beauty that is highlighted and covered from the air and ground.

Nevada

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Edward Weibert 11/10/68-A.M.* 71*M

Edward Weibert

Missing: 11/10/68-AM, Gerlach, NV

Age at disappearance: 71 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Illness/ Disability

Missing person cases from the State of Nevada are rare. I've been asked hundreds of times why there aren't more missing from this area. I believe the answer is pretty easy, there isn't a lot of ground cover, and if someone goes missing, they are easily spotted from the air. Although this case happened in the sagebrush state, it happened as close to California as one could imagine.

In November of 1968, Edward Weibert was living in the Lennox hotel in downtown, Reno Nevada. He was a very experienced outdoorsman who had hunted the western border many times.

On November 10, 1968, Edward traveled with Mr. and Mrs. Earl Howell, their son Gary and Edward's longtime hunting partner Wesley Yoas to an area 45 miles northwest of Gerlach called, Duck Flat, very close to the California border. The region is almost devoid of any ground cover. The small number of trees that exists in the area is just north of the flats. This November 12, 1968 edition of the Nevada State Journal had these details about what happened, "The missing man's hunting companions said that Weibert had reported feeling tired as they hiked up a draw about 9 a.m. Sunday. It was decided that he should return to the base camp in Duck Flat area alone and wait. That was the last seen of the missing man."

The Washoe County Sheri took charge of the SAR. They were able to get seven Civil Air Patrol (CAP) planes and dozens of volunteers to look for the lost hunter. This November 13, 1968 edition of the Nevada State Journal had this update, "CAP o icials in Reno said there was rain and snow in the search area Monday night and early Tuesday but, although visibility was limited, aircraft flew a few sorties." The SAR continued until Saturday when they had exhausted searchers and ran out of resources.

There were no updates about this case until this article in the November 1, 1973 edition of the Reno Gazette, "A human skeleton, possibly that of a long-missing Reno hunter was found Wednesday about 60 miles northwest of Gerlach, the Washoe County Sheri

Department reported. The remains were discovered by a Yerington deer hunter, James Adams in a thickly wooded area, deputies said."

There was one big flashing yellow light to this case. Edward was reported missing 45 miles northwest of Gerlach, and his remains were located 60 miles northwest of Gerlach. He was last seen heading back to camp because he was exhausted. Do you believe a 71-year-old man that was tired could've traversed 15 miles without being seen? He was located in a dense forest. The closest area with dense vegetation to the flats is in California. The vast majority of this part of Nevada is sagebrush. If you heard planes flying overhead, and you were lost, the last place you'd go would be in trees. Lastly, Edward was a very experienced hunter. He knew to fire three rounds to indicate you needed assistance, nothing was heard.

This is a very bizarre story with an incredibly sad ending.

New Jersey

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

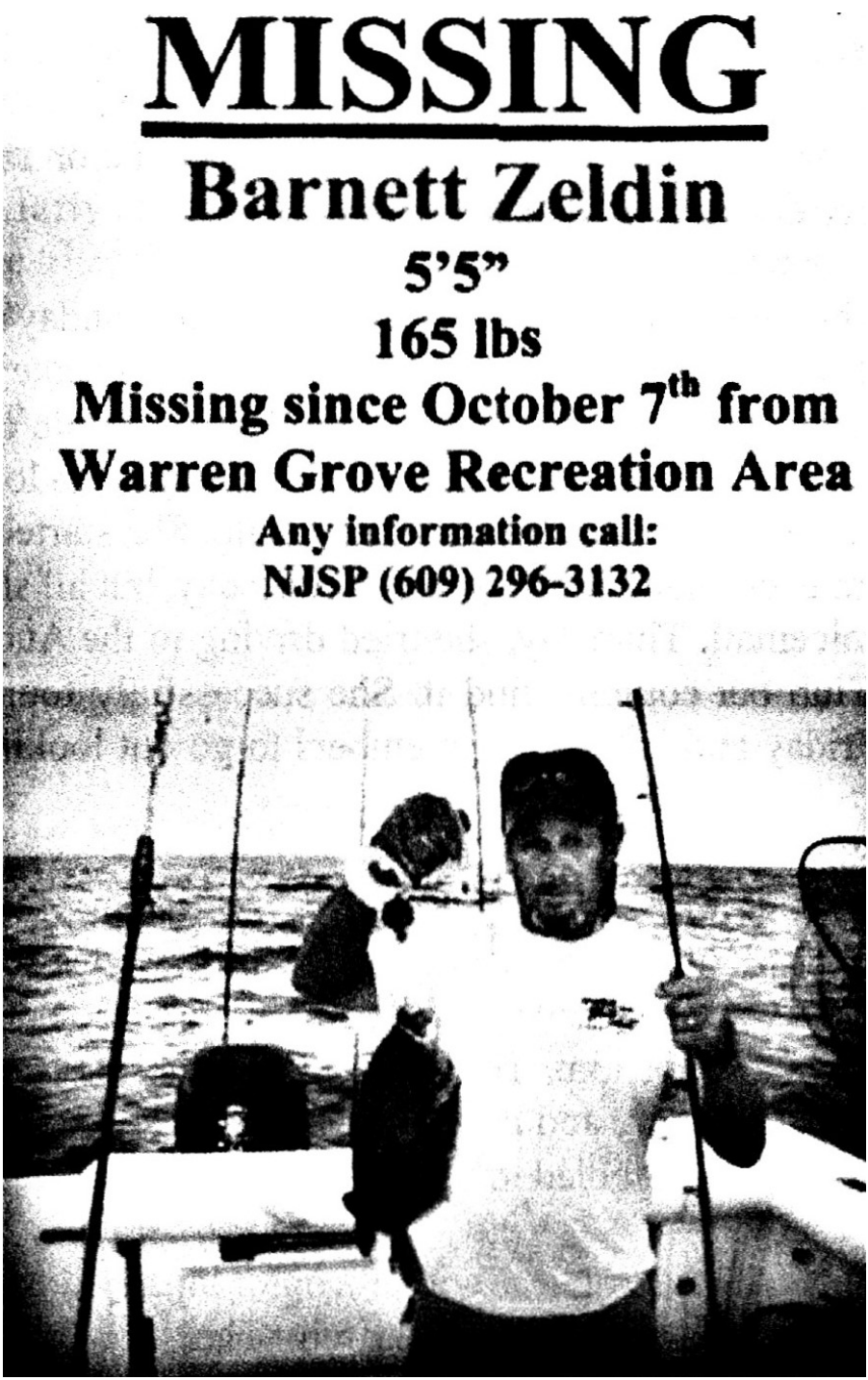
Barnett Zeldin 10/07/2013* 74*M

Barnett Zeldin

Missing: 10/07/2013, Wharton Forest, NJ

Age at disappearance: 74 years

Water* Canines* Weather



Janet and Barnett "Barry" Zeldin worked a lifetime operating Barry's Pretzels and Rice's Market in New Hope, Pennsylvania. The couple finally retired and moved to May's Landing, New Jersey. Mr. and Mrs.

Zeldin celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on October 5, 2013.

On October 7, 2013, Barry told Janet that he was going to take the family's fox terrier puppy, Ta y, with him and drive the fifteen miles northwest to his deer hunting area in the Wharton Forest. It was shotgun season in the area, and Janet knew that Barry would be gone sometimes as long as two days.

Barry drove to the Audubon Gun Club, where he was a member. He checked in at 9:55 a.m. The club makes members sign in, so they know how many are on the property at any one time.

On October 15, 2014, the Philadelphia CBS station ran the following story detailing Janet's actions:

When her husband didn't come home or call Monday night, Zeldin wasn't worried because he was known to make spontaneous hunting trips that lasted several days. "I didn't think much of it. I figured maybe he got a deer and he was looking for it. He's very independent," says Zeldin. She started calling him every hour Tuesday and Wednesday, but all she got was voicemail. Thursday, she tried driving to the Audubon Gun Club but couldn't find it. She successfully found the club Friday and got several members to go out looking for Barry.

Members of the club found Barry's green Chevrolet Blazer parked on the right side of a dirt road with the keys in the ignition. The windows were rolled down, and his fox terrier, Ta y, was still inside waiting for him. The dog had apparently eaten some of the bait he had brought, and it was believed that she must've drunk some rainwater that dribbled into the car from the inclement weather the previous days.

New Jersey State Police put a helicopter in the air and brought Bloodhounds onto the scene to search. The bloodhounds were brought to the car and asked to find a scent. Barry's deer stand was just one hundred yards o the road in the forest. They searched the entire area thoroughly but found nothing. Barry's son, Glenn, and his son-in law, David Belcher, drove Barry's car throughout the area, searching and passing out his missing person poster.

The state police terminated the search for Barry after just a few days—a very short period of time to look for anyone that is missing.

Wharton State Forest is located just fifteen miles from Barry's home and ten miles from the Atlantic Ocean. The Mullica River runs through

the center of the park, and the area has regions that are swamps and bogs.

If you think about the scenario that was presented to the family and searchers, you must surmise that there was no way he was planning to be gone for long from the car. He left the window down and keys in the ignition. I would like to have known how much scat and urine Ta y left in the truck. Since the dog would've had to have been in the truck for at least four days, she must've been moderately dehydrated.

There are a series of unusual disappearances running north along the Atlantic Coast starting in New York City.

New Mexico

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Louis H. Teller 11 /06/5 7• 30*M

Michael Henley Jr. 04/21/88* 9*M

Melvin Nadel 09/06/2009* 61 *M

Louis H. Teller

Missing: 11/06/57, Philmont Scouting Camp, NM

Age at disappearance: 30 years Point of Separation* Weather*

It's a rare occasion that I have ever written about the disappearance of a Native American. This incident takes place east of the Philmont Scout Ranch forty-five miles south of the Colorado border and just east of Taos. To add clarity to the location, it was twenty miles west of Springer and five miles south of Cimarron.

On November 6, 1957, Louis H. Teller was a member of the Laguna Indian Tribe; he lived in Isleta, a small Native American community south of Albuquerque. He had

hunted the Philmont area many times in the past. He was hunting with his friend Joe Abeyta. Joe stated that the two were hunting the area of White's Peak when they got separated. Joe said that he searched for his friend for several hours and then returned to camp. Louis never returned to his car, and Joe contacted the Raton sheri .

The sheri initially responded with equestrians and Jeeps to search the mountain and mesas. When Joe and Louis were hunting and when searchers got onto the scene, a heavy fog covered the area and kept planes on the ground and restricted the searchers visibility. Nighttime temperatures were well below freezing.

Eventually the fog lifted, and the sheri contacted the National Guard for assistance. The guard not only sent ground troops, but Colonel Glen Allbright, the assistant adjutant general, flew a National Guard plane for two days searching for Louis. After five days without finding anything, the search was terminated.

Friends, family, and tribal members went back to the area of the disappearance many times looking for Louis's body. They never found anything.

There was nothing new on the case until November 6, 1960, when hunters found human remains in the same general area where Louis had vanished. The skeleton went to the New Mexico State Police forensics lab. Months later they stated that the remains were of a much older man, whom they could not identify. When I read about this event, I thought it was odd that with all the publicity surrounding this find, they couldn't determine the identity of the man.

On October 1, 1961, there was another major find, this time twenty-three miles west of Springer, far outside the area that Louis was hunting. An October 3, 1961, article in the Albuquerque Jour-nal had these details: “Articles found with the skeleton in mountain country 23 miles west of Springer by bear hunters Sunday are shown here. It is believed the articles belong to Louis H. Teller of Isleta, who disappeared in the area November 6, 1957.” The photo showed a 270 rifle, .38-caliber pistol, a lighter, comb, folding money, change, and a wallet containing a credit card in his name. They had confirmed that it was Louis. Five bear hunters—G. M. Hale, Lyle Roop, Leandro Martinez, Rudy Pacheco, and Sam Roy—found the body. The remains were found in what was described as “very rugged country.” An October 3 article in the Alamogordo Daily had the thoughts of a police o icer about what happened to Louis: “State Policeman Finis Roberts of Springer theorized the man might have fallen from a high rock stumbling along in the fog. He said it didn’t appear any foul play was involved.” O icer Roberts definitely hedged his statement, saying that “it doesn’t appear any foul play was involved.” I have read dozens of reports just like this, involving missing hunters, hikers, and others who somehow fell a significant distance and died. Start paying attention to details involving missing people. I know that when I am alone deep in the woods, I am much more careful than when I’m with others. Louis knew this area like his backyard. He had hunted it for years. He just happened to be found three miles farther west than where searchers had originally thought he would be. It is obvious from the statements of Joe and searchers, weather greatly inhibited finding Louis during those initial days he was missing.

One last point is important to mention, Louis vanished in the area where New Mexico’s largest forest fire had burned in 1956. Many articles stated that several thousand acres burned and de-scribed the land as burnt over. Think what this means. The area they were searching was essentially barren land without obstacles, trees, or large bush. It had only been one year since the massive fire, and nothing had time to grow back.

Whatever happened to Louis killed him quickly. Nobody ever heard any rounds fired. The weather wasn’t so atrocious that it would inhibit the hunter from hiking out. It is amazing that if Louis was in that spot the entire time, aerial surveillance, equestrians, and an entire National Guard troop couldn’t find him.

Michael Henley Jr.

Missing: 04/21/88, Zuni Mountains, NM

Age at disappearance: 9 years

Point of Separation* Canines* Previously Searched

This incident happened at the far northwest corner of the state, just southwest of Grants, New Mexico. On April 21, 1988, Michael Henley Sr. had taken his son, Michael Jr., on a turkey hunting trip to the Zuni Mountains, specifically the Oso Ridge region, where elevations got to 8,400 feet. The two hunters somehow got separated, and dad could not find son. Michael Sr. returned to camp and notified the Cibola County Sheri 's Department. The sheri 's department responded swiftly and in force, getting three hundred people onto the mountain searching by the end of the first day. They believed they found one partial print in the snow, but immediately after Michael Sr. lost Michael Jr., snow started to fall, and this compromised search e orts.

The sheri 's department got four civil air patrol planes, an air force helicopter, and a state police helicopter in the air, and men on horseback and motorcycles, all looking for Michael Jr. Searchers commented that this was one of the biggest searches they had ever participated in. Specially trained dog teams were brought to the area, but they were unable to track any scent.

On June 23, 1990, a rancher was walking a fence line five to six miles from the location where Michael Jr. was last seen and observed a small amount of bones and clothing. He called the sheri .

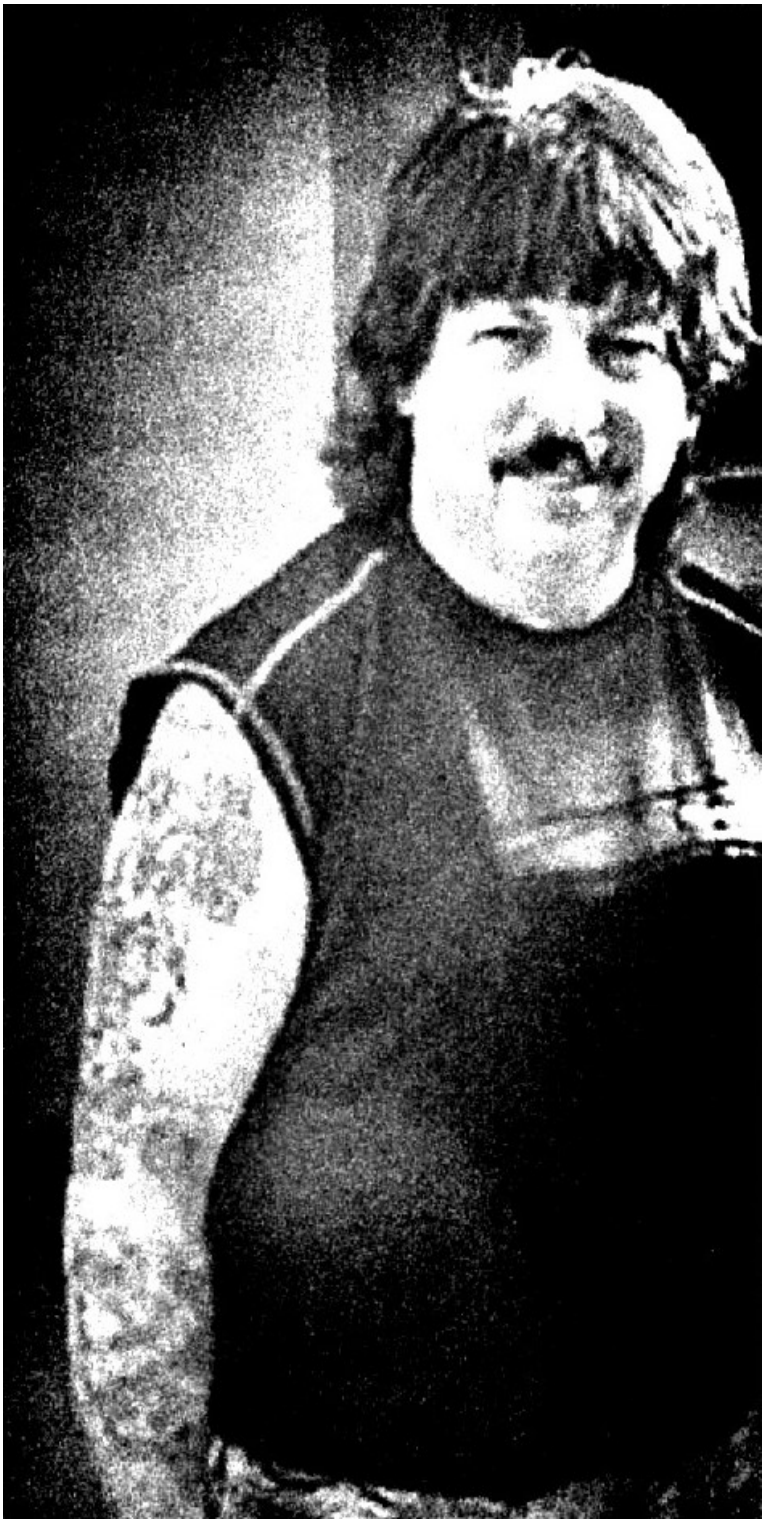
There was a June 26, 1990, article in the Roswell Daily Record that

had some notes about the questions Michael Sr. had: “Henley said he asked deputies why the remains weren’t found in the search and

that they described the area as being very rough.”

You can tell by the deputy’s response that they never really answered the father’s concerns. It seems like an appropriate question, since searchers claimed they had covered everything within a ten- mile radius of the point the boy was last seen. Articles that I found never absolutely confirmed that the partial skeleton found did belong to Michael Jr., even though deputies were fairly certain it was the boy.

This case has many of the elements we routinely see when we classify a case for the study. It seems very odd that the body was found in an area with many bushes but few large trees. How and why helicopters and planes never saw the boy and how he disappeared from camp so quickly seem to be the real questions.



Melvin Nadel

Missing: 09/6/2009, Elk Mountain, Santa Fe National Forest, NM

Age at disappearance: 61 years

Point of Separation» Disability» Canines» Bow Hunter

It's sometimes easier for people to understand why someone goes missing when they have significant medical is-sues, but when the person who disappears is a black belt in tae kwon do, a Pilates instructor, and a longtime hunter, questions about what happened in the woods are bound to be asked.

Melvin Nadel owned and operated Pilates Fitness Plus near downtown Santa Fe. Melvin was a hands-on owner. He not only met people at the door and did the accounting for the business, but also ran many of the classes. Longtime customers of the studio stated that one of the main reasons they enjoyed the studio was the class that Melvin taught.

Melvin's wife, Edna, operated a daycare facility out of their residence. Their daughter, Kristen, was enrolled at the local community college. Kristen, a certified fitness instructor, taught classes at the Pilates studio. The Nadel's had moved to Santa Fe in 1991 from their original hometown, Brooklyn, New York.

It's easy to say that a family is tight and enjoys each other, but the Nadel's really did. Melvin and Kristen were extremely close, as Melvin had homeschooled Kristen until she went to community college. The family went on vacations together, camped together, and spent significant time at their businesses together.

Melvin was a small man in stature (five feet two) but a big man in town whom his customers loved. Prior to the Pilates studio, Melvin owned a jewelry business in town. While in Santa Fe, he earned his black belt in tae kwon do and started his fitness regimen to keep himself healthy. He knew the value of staying healthy, as both his mom and dad had died early in life.

In the first week of September 2009, Melvin and some friends decided to go hunting in the Santa Fe National Forest, Pecos Wilderness, in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Melvin drove his 2001 Jeep up to an area near eleven thousand feet. He was near Pecos, fourteen miles o NM63 and Forest Road 646. The extremely desolate and very rugged region contains many exposed boulders and steep cli s.

Late in the afternoon on September 6, Melvin told his friends that he was going to walk down an adjacent trail fifty to one hundred fifty yards away and stay in that area. He had a slight knee injury and didn't want to walk long distances. Melvin's specific type of hunting involved setting up a blind and sitting to wait for game to pass. He was carrying a camouflaged bow with zebra-striped arrows and a ,44-caliber pistol. At 4:30 p.m., Melvin Nadel started down the trail, never to return.

His friends notified the state police, and they initiated a massive search. National Guard helicopters, law enforcement canines, horses, volunteers, and all-terrain vehicles swarmed the area and adjacent mountains without finding one trace of Melvin—no bow, no arrows, no gun, no clothing, nothing. The search was hampered just after the disappearance when four to five inches of snow dropped. The canines brought into camp started their search by walking directly down the trail where Melvin stated he was going. At the one-hundred-fifty-yard marker, they stopped. This validates that Melvin walked down the trail, but canines don't just stop without justification. The canines would not proceed farther than the marker.

The o icial state police search for Melvin ended six days after it started. Edna and Kristen rallied all friends, family, and business relationships to keep the search going for almost six weeks. The six-week period is a reasonable time to search for anyone who had a likelihood of being there, but the state police search of only six days seems short for a man who was in superior condition and had the opportunity to survive.

Law enforcement searched Melvin's Jeep and found the items they expected. They could positively state that the only things missing were the bow, arrows, and pistol that he was last seen carrying. The vehicle had not been damaged, and law enforcement did not consider foul play as an option in the disappearance.

One year after Melvin Nadel's disappearance, State Police lieutenant Eric Garcia stated that the Nadel case remains open and active and that many leads have been investigated, but none have yielded any evidence.

Summary

There are several issues in the Nadel case that pop out as unusual. First, Melvin is a fairly short man. Please look at his photo and notice that he has long hair to the shoulders in the back. If Melvin Was

approached by a predator from the rear, he could have been mistaken for a female hunter—short height, long hair. Maybe this mistake led to his disappearance.

To be a successful bow hunter, you have to be a stealthy hunter. You must have the ability to hide the human odor, stay camouflaged, and get very close to your prey. Did Melvin inadvertently get too close to something or someone?

We know that Melvin went to the exact spot he had told his friends—one hundred fifty yards down the trail. Why would a trained canine track exactly one hundred fifty yards down a trail and stop? Canines are trained to continue to track the specific odor until it terminates. Odors don't terminate with death or disappearance.

One year after Melvin disappeared, Edna and Kristen filed paperwork in the superior courts of Santa Fe to have Melvin legally declared dead. This was a standard request because the family needed social security benefits and the ability to transfer titles in local properties. The Santa Fe attorney who filed the case used the following logic in requesting the death certificate: "There are only two explanations for Melvin's disappearance: He wandered o , got lost and died of natural causes, exposure or animal attack, or, was abducted, taken to an undisclosed location, killed and his body disposed."

The likelihood that Melvin was attacked by a mountain lion, bear, elk, or some other recognized mammal in New Mexico is nearly zero. If Melvin had been attacked and killed, there would have been a large evidence scene with blood, bones, and tissue. The area was not vacated long enough for animals to remove all the evidence. He would have been found, at least in pieces. The possibility that Melvin was abducted and taken from the scene utilizing standard abduction techniques also seems extremely remote. Melvin was parked on the only road to the summit of Elk Mountain. Melvin was with friends hunting the mountain, and someone would have seen others in the area. There is a general store that many frequent twenty miles from the disappearance. Workers would have seen others in the area. The greatest question is, why would anyone want to abduct Melvin? Searchers scoured the area where he disappeared for six weeks and didn't find any illegal drug factories or grow patches, so this would not have been a motive.

I believe that Melvin was lying low, very low, in his blind. It was getting cold and dark, and he chose to hunt in the late afternoon, a time when animals start to come out. I believe that something

surprised Melvin, something unusual, something fatal, and something he couldn't control and didn't expect. Imagine a search, a very thorough search, where Melvin's weapons, clothing, and the supplies he was carrying were not found. How does this happen?

This is one of the cases that are highlighted in our movie, Missing 411- The Hunted. I was fortunate to meet Edna Nadel and have a lengthy interview with her at a local restaurant in Santa Fe. I saw so many qualities in Mel's wife that reminded me of many victim's relatives. She was still upset and confused as to why her husband was not found. I asked her if Mel had shot an elk, would he have tracked it for miles? Edna was very straight forward, she said that Mel did not like to hike or walk long distances. He might walk a short distance, but never far. It was this exact point that had her compromised as to where he might be. Edna and I spoke about many aspects of the search and this is covered in the movie.

I think there is a common theme that runs through the heart of each of the disappearances highlighted in this book.

New York

Missing Person Date Missing» Age» Sex

Carleton Banker 11/11/16, noon» 56» M

Leighton Goodell 10/12/24-p.m.» 64»M

Wesley Meserole 11/26/40» 28» M

Paul Bell 11/01/56» 26»M

Joseph Allevato 11/06/71, 5:00 p.m.» 74» M

George Bombardier 11/29/71, 5:00p.m.» 55» M

James Howard 11/23/73, 9:00 p.m.» 19» M

George Woltjen 10/24/92» 60»M

Mark Perri 10/20/2006» 3 9»M

Thomas Messick 11/15/2015,2:00 p.m.» 82»M

Carleton Banker

Missing: 11/11/16, noon, Piseco Lake, NY

Age at disappearance: 56 years

Point of Separation» Disability/ Illness» Weather» Canines

As you start to read this chapter, it's important to know the geographical locations to which I will refer. From time to time, look at Google Maps on your computer. If you are a reader of past books, the area surrounding Indian Lakes will start to look familiar. I've written about many cases within a sixty-mile radius of the small town.

To understand a story, it sometimes helps to understand the man. The victim in this section was listed under three di erent first names: Carleton, Carlton, and Charleton. I will stick with Carleton.

I've not written about many people who traveled more across the United States in the late 1800s than Carleton Banker. He was born in Montgomery County, New York. In his early years, he lived on a farm with his parents. He then moved to Staley, Nebraska, where he got a job as a station agent for the Burlington and Missouri Railroad. He stayed with this railroad company until 1893 and then traveled back east and got another job for the Cayadutta Electric Railroad, traveling between Fonda and Gloversville, New York.

Carleton excelled in the railroad industry and in 1903 was promoted to the superintendent's position in the electric division of the Fonda, Johnstown, and Gloversville Railroad, after the Cayadutta Electric Railroad merged with another railroad.

On November 7, 1916, Carleton traveled with F. A. Bagg, the chief engineer of the railroad that he worked for. The two friends got together with four other hunters and drove to the Truman Lawrence Hunting Camp at Piseco Lake. Carleton was a married man with two daughters. His wife knew he liked to get away on short two- to three-day trips and didn't mind these excursions.

On November 10, Carleton and Bagg put their packs on and hiked six miles into the Foxy Browns Hunting Camp. Carleton had hunted and fished this location for over twenty years. He knew the men and the area extremely well.

On November 11, Carleton, Bagg, and a third hunter took o into the woods to hunt. At about noon, Carleton complained of not feeling well and wanted to sit and relax. Bagg and the other hunter left Carleton on the side of Lunkazu Mountain, walked around the northwest side, and headed to get their vehicle to give Carleton a ride back. They got a car and drove back to where they'd left Carleton and couldn't locate

him. The two thought that he might have felt better and walked back to camp. They returned to camp and didn't find their friend. They stayed up until 11:00 p.m. and then fired three shots into the air. They did not get a return. It was at this point that F. A. Bagg got very concerned for his friend and decided to go into Piseco and ask for assistance. The following morning there were one hundred fifty men in their camp ready to search.

During the following five days, sleet and light snow and rain inundated the search area. Bloodhounds were summoned from Rome, New York. The dogs were held up on clogged roads for a day. By the time canine teams got to the location, it was snowing heavier. Articles at the time stated that the dogs were useless in the snowy weather. Other articles claimed they did track short distances.

A November 16, 1916, article in the Oneonta Star had these details about the search e ort: "Tracks supposed to be Banker's were followed a short distance along the fall stream which empties into Piseco Lake, and there all traces were lost. Bloodhounds were given the scent today and they followed what guides and hunters believed to be traces of Banker until the spot was reached on the fall stream, where it was evident he had spent some time, but there the dogs, like the other searchers gave up the search, there being nothing to guide them further." That is a fascinating statement. Imagine that it had snowed up to eight inches over the previous one to two days: they couldn't follow a track in the snow? It doesn't make sense to me. If they were in a rocky area, you work inside out in a radius circle until you pick up the tracks again.

The railroad put up a large reward for the recovery of Carleton's body. The reward was never claimed, and the body never found.

If you told your friends that you would wait for them at a specific location, what would prompt you to leave that area, knowing that help is coming? There have been dozens of occasions where soon- to-be victims told their friends that they didn't feel well. Somehow these people get isolated. Once alone, they disappear. Granted, Carleton may have merely been fatigued or tired, but that is one of the claims made by the dozens that subsequently vanished. There is truly something odd about the Adirondacks and its association with missing people.

Leighton Goodell

Missing 10/12/24- PM, Kushaqua Lake, NY

Age at disappearance: 64 years

Canines* Point of Separation* Cluster Zone

This is one of those incredibly rare disappearances, one that involves a law enforcement o icer. There are just a handful of cases that a ect current or retired police o icers, and this is one.

Leighton Goodell spent twenty-five years patrolling the streets of Bu alo New York. Most of his career was spent at the Cold Spring Station where he was known in his o -duty hours as a hunter and outdoorsman who every fall made a trek to the Adirondacks to hunt deer.

On October 5, 1924, Leighton left his home at number 88 Harvard Place in Bu alo, picked up his nephew, Dr. Charles Goodell and made the drive to the Kushaqua Lodge for deer and partridge hunting. The location they were hunting would be the region near Kushaqua and Loon Lake on the western slopes of Signal Mountain.

In the afternoon hours of October 12, Leighton and a friend decided to leave the lodge and hunt partridge. As the pair were in the woods, they decided to separate, and Leighton stated he'd find his way back alone. As darkness enveloped the lodge, almost immediately a call was made to authorities. Bloodhounds and state troopers were on the scene and searching the first night.

SAR commanders brought in game wardens, police o icers, state troopers and twenty students from the Adirondack Florida School combed the woods searching. This October 15, 1924 article in the Bu alo Courier had these unusual facts from the search, "Bloodhound trails today led searchers to a place where Goodell apparently had stopped to drink from a stream and then to a stump where it is believed he halted to rest. The dogs lost the trail at the stump, and only led back to it again when they were taken to the starting point." Readers, these are disturbing indicators by the canines. Scents of humans don't stop in the middle of the forest. If Bloodhounds twice tracked directly to the stump and stopped, that doesn't make sense.

The search was focusing on the Lake Kushaqua and Signal Mountain area. I did look up what Kushaqua means, "Beautiful resting place." This October 20 1924 edition of the Hartford Courant had details on how the search wound down, "After a week's futile search, hope for the life of Leighton Goodell, 64-year-old hunter who was lost in the forest last Sunday, has been abandoned and extreme doubts expressed

by leaders of the searching parties that his body ever will be discovered. “The search was over, and Leighton was not found. Add another case to the geographical cluster zone in the Adirondacks.

Years after Leighton’s disappearance there were articles about the case and the mystery of the retired o icer never being found.

Wesley Meserole

Missing: 11/26/40, North Dome Mountain, NY Age at disappearance: 28 years

Weather* Water

I haven’t written about the Catskill Mountains much in my past books. This incident happened just twenty-two miles west of Germantown, New York, and the Hudson River. North Dome Mountain has an elevation of 3,609 feet and is located in Greene County New York. The area around this mountain is very thick with vegetation and overgrowth.

On November 26, 1940, Wesley Meserole was a married father of two children. He was an undertaker living just across the waterway of Kennedy International Airport in Inwood, New York.

Wesley drove his car from Long Island to North Dome Mountain and took a dirt road as far as he could and parked. He left the vehicle to go deer hunting. When Wesley didn’t return home that night, his wife called Wesley’s dad and law enforcement.

Frank Meserole was the superintendent of highways in Hempstead, New York. This was a prestigious governmental position that carried political weight. He heard of his son’s disappearance and immediately went to the area to aid in the e ort to find his son.

The search didn’t get started until November 27. The local authorities requested and received seventy conservation workers as searchers. As this was getting organized, snow started to fall in the area and got heavier by the hour. O icials knew the mountain that Wesley was hunting but didn’t know where he started. On November 28 searchers finally located Wesley’s car. At this point there was so much snow on the ground that they couldn’t locate any tracks. They really had no idea what direction Wesley had taken to hunt.

On November 29, Wesley’s father helped raise two hundred fifty dollars as a reward for finding his son. Frank thought the money

might encourage some people to get onto the mountain and look for his boy.

On December 2, snow had continued to fall on North Dome Mountain and was now waist deep in spots. It was treacherous hiking and made searching almost impossible. New York State troopers and rangers made the determination to cancel the search after just four days.

Frank Meserole was devastated by the loss of his son. During the following months, there were reports that shotgun rounds were found near one lake in the area. At one point Frank believed that Wesley might have been in one of the lakes. It was never clear in any article why Frank thought this. When the shells were closely looked at, they realized that two of the three were not of the caliber he'd have been carrying.

Frank went to his home and immediately started making plans to go back to the mountain to look for Wesley. There was a March 16, 1941, article in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle that described Frank's plans: "If we can search those mountains thoroughly after the thaw and before the underbrush starts,' the father said. I think we can find Wesley. I can't leave him up there.'" The Fireman's Association of New York scheduled one last search for the weekend of May 4. They found nothing. According to the best of my research, it appears that Wesley is still somewhere on North Dome Mountain.

The delays incurred in finding Wesley's car could've made the di erence in whether searchers got to him and were able to follow his tracks before snow started to fall. The importance of telling family and friends exactly where you are going cannot be minimized. I'm sure these delays ate at Frank. The inclement weather delayed searchers getting to the area because of bad road conditions. The mountains' in this area aren't huge or overly steep compared to the Rockies or the West Coast of the United States. I'm surprised that Wesley's remains have never been located.

Paul Bell

Missing: 11/01/56, Windsor, NY

Age at disappearance: 26 years

Previously Searched* Illness/Disability* Hunter

The location of this incident is far southern New York near the Pennsylvania border has had many disappearances over the years. In

this case, a massive search for a young hunter in a rural area leaves searchers stumped as is described in this November 4, 1956 article in the Press and Sun-Bulletin, “The mystery disappearance of Paul Bell, a 26-year old Windsor hunter missing since he left on a squirrel hunting expedition last Thursday morning, was no nearer solution last night after a third day of fruitless searching on Occanum Hill west of Windsor.”

Paul was a hard-working laborer on the Cecil Hoosier Farm just outside of Windsor where he lived with his mom for 17 years. On the morning of November 1, 1956, he was near the top of the plateau on the farm cutting polewood when he said he saw a group of squirrels. He returned to the farmhouse, got his shotgun and told his mom he was going hunting. Remember, this was near the top of the plateau on the farm.

At 5:00 p.m. Paul had not returned from hunting, and his mom called the New York State Police that immediately started a search. Patrolman, voluntary firefighters, students and locals totaling 150 responded to the request for searchers. The Civil Air Patrol sent planes that circled the sky for four days, finding nothing. The e ort to locate Paul was focused on where Mrs. Bell knew her son was hunting, the top of the plateau.

Several news agencies reported that Mrs. Bell had stated that her son sometimes had terrible nose bleeds and he was asthmatic. It was never said that he wasn’t anything but very able to take care of himself in the woods and knew the 1000-acre farm like his backyard. It was also the belief of his mom and farm owners that Paul would stay on the 1000 acres.

After six days of intensive searching, the police pulled people from the field under the belief they had covered all possible locations that Paul could be found. Several newspapers stated it was now the opinion of the police that Paul had planned to leave the farm and that this was voluntary disappearance.

Three years after Paul vanished, hunters were approximately one mile from the plateau when they located a human skull. The group searched further and found a shotgun and boots; they then called state police. Troopers responded and knew that Paul had vanished in this area and contacted the owners of Paul’s farm who responded and identified the boots and shotgun as Paul’s. He was located in an area that troopers, his mother and the farmers never thought he’d be. He was in deep thickets, on the opposite side of the road as the farm and

down a long hill from the plateau where he said he'd be. Everyone understood that the hunter would stay on the farm property and never walk a long distance searching for squirrels.

A cause of death was never confirmed for Paul Bell. Why he was found in a location that nobody believed that he would be, an area that wasn't a focus for the search and a place that wasn't farm property will forever be a mystery.

Joseph Allevato

Missing: 11/06/71, 5:00 p.m., Bergen Swamp, NY

Age at disappearance: 74 years

Point of Separation» Weather» Canines» Previously Searched

People often go missing or are found under unusual conditions in swamps. Normal people won't travel there, and sometimes large mammals try to find a quiet place to live and thrive there. Under the right circumstances, a swamp or bog can be a hunting haven.

On November 6, 1971, Joseph Allevato and his son-in law, Raymond Ezrow, drove along Swamp Road on the south side of the Bergen Swamp seven miles south of Lake Ontario and forty miles east of Niagara Falls. The swamp is a densely wooded place that is six miles long. The pair parked their car adjacent to the narrowest section of the swamp and agreed to meet back at the vehicle at 5:00 p.m. after they were done squirrel hunting. Joseph never made it back. Raymond looked for his partner until it got dark, yelling for Joseph and not getting an answer. He drove from the area to get the assistance of law enforcement.

The Genesee County sheri and New York State Police took over as mutually in command for the search for Joseph. The SAR was long and thorough. Wind, snow, rain, and cold temperatures caused the search to start and stop multiple times. A November 15 article in the Democrat and Chronicle had these details: "The search resumed Sunday with a helicopter joining troopers, sheri 's deputies, volunteer firemen, Civil Defense Auxiliary Police, Bloodhounds, relatives and friends on horseback. By Tuesday, three search planes from 3-Star Aviation of Leroy had joined a small army of searchers." This was a monumental e ort. Multiple bloodhound teams participated in the search and never found a good scent trail that led to the body. Handlers stated that multiple dogs tracked the scent along Swamp Road for about a thousand feet adjacent to the swamp. They never

stated that the dogs entered the inside of the swamp.

Joseph was dressed all in red, and this attire was thought to be helpful to searchers as he would've stuck out. The o icial search was terminated on November 16. Family and friends continued to search for Joseph for another week. They found nothing.

In search operations, ground teams start close to the location where the person was last seen and work outward by gridding the land and everyone taking a specific area. In Joseph's case, they would start at the car and slowly work their way into the swamp in a wider and wider radius. The air support covers a much wider area with the emphasis being close to the PLS.

On December 9, 1971, thirty-three days after Joseph vanished, nineteen-year-old Dale McFiggens was hunting the swamp and discovered something remarkable, as is described in this December 10 article in the Democrat and Chronicle: "Mr. Allevato's body was discovered face down on the ground, his 16 gauge shotgun leaning against a tree, by Dale McFiggens, 19. The body was found about 9:00 a.m. in an area south of Black Creek which runs through the swamp." Later in the same article is this: "McFiggens said he saw the body which lay from 150 to 200 yards south of the creek in the narrowest section of the east west swamp. The location was almost directly north of where the man was last seen alive." When I read the description of where Joseph was found, I was shocked. This could not have been more than five hundred yards from the PLS (Point Last Seen) and an area that must've been covered many times during the search. The body was extremely close to the place where the men separated and obviously in an area that was easy to maneuver through because Dale made it.

The finding of a body in such close proximity to where the person vanished isn't unusual in my stories. Many readers have commented that it's almost as though the body had to have been put there to be easily found. It does seem a bit odd that Joseph's shotgun was found leaning against a nearby tree, and he was found face down on the ground. The coroner made a determination that he'd died of a heart attack. There was never any mention as to how long he had been dead or the state the body was found in.

George Bombardier

Missing: 11/29/71, 5:00 p.m., Brighton, NY

Age at disappearance: 55 years

Disability/ Illness* Weather*

The headlines in this story indicated the nearest city was “Paul Smiths in New York.” Upon further research we found that the disappearance actually occurred in Brighton, New York, just one mile east of Paul Smiths. What is highly interesting is that this happened just eight miles west of the disappearance of an elderly female in Vermontville, New York (See Missing 411-The Devil’s in the Detail). Both of these areas have hundreds of small bodies of water, and both are very lush with thick forests.

George Bombardier was a lifetime hunter who always went to the same location to enjoy the outdoors and hunt deer. He was a retiree from the Rouse Point and Delaware Railroad, and he owned a hunting company in the area of Paul Smiths. George wasn’t in perfect health. He needed daily medication for a blood condition. George was considered an expert woodsman by friends and family.

On November 29, 1971, George was hunting at his longtime favorite location, just outside the town of Brighton. It should be noted that three articles stated George went missing on November 29, and other articles stated November 27, 28, and 30. It’s impossible to determine what the actual date of the disappearance was, so we will use November 29 because that was the date the majority utilized.

George went hunting alone and told his family that he’d be back late in the afternoon. George never made it home. The family contacted local natural resource o icers and sheri s. Many friends and family assisted in the e ort to locate George, an e ort that continued for over two weeks. Searchers did find George’s truck but could not locate him. Hundreds participated in the e ort, which was eventually terminated because of bad weather.

There was another push to find George in May 1972. Again, the search e ort found nothing. A May 31,1972, article in the Press-Republican had this statement about the feelings of family and friends: “No one who knew him believes he became lost.” It does seem coincidental that two people disappeared just miles apart. One mature man, one mature woman, both with medical conditions, and both are never found.

James A. Howard

Missing: 11/23/73, 9:00 p.m., Camp Drum, NY

Age at disappearance: 19 years

Water* Point of Separation* Weather

This is a very rare incident that centers on illegal hunting on a US Army base in Camp Drum, New York. Camp Drum is predominantly known as a summer training facility for National Guard Troops. There is a small full-time army presence on the facility year- round. The camp is just five miles from Lake Ontario. This proximity is important.

This region near Lake Ontario and encircling to the north into Canada has a history of unusual disappearances that I have chronicled in my books. The other unusual coincidence is that the disappearances in this area are predominantly young men.

James Howard was a nineteen-year-old living with his family in Antwerp, New York. The city is just two miles northeast of Camp Drum.

On November 23, 1973, in the early-evening hours, James, his brother, and two friends decided to leave their home, take their rifles, and head toward Camp Drum to hunt for deer. There was no hunting allowed on the base, and access was normally heavily restricted. This December 4, 1973, article in the Daily Messenger explains what happened: '"The boy was last seen on the 23rd of November and the search began on the 24th,' said Sharp." He had been with four others, and they were hunting illegally at Camp Drum, an Army training camp. It's used mainly in the summer by the National Guard, but I guess there's an Army personnel there year round." The young hunter got separated from his companions on a foggy and dark Friday night at the camp just north of Watertown.

As the article states, the search started on the twenty-fourth. The army had serious concerns because they had learned from James's brother where he'd become lost. They had determined that James was probably inside the artillery range. Only a small number of the total searchers were allowed into this area because of the probability of unexploded shells. They did question the hunters, and nobody reported hearing any explosions.

Early in the search e ort, New York rangers got helicopters and planes into the sky to search the military reservation. They also received the assistance of fifty men from the Watertown 332nd Ordnance Battalion. There were over one hundred searchers from the surrounding communities that volunteered their services.

A December 6 article in the Syracuse Post stated that the search for James had been reduced to just twenty volunteers. There were no other updates after this report. Bad weather had restricted air support on the search.

There were many articles at the time of this search that implied the possibility that James may have been killed by unexploded ordnance he stepped on. The probability of getting killed in this manner and no body parts being found is almost impossible. It was also reported that the names of James's hunting partners wouldn't be released because of the possibility they might be criminally charged. James's brother's name wasn't released, but it was reported that he was with his brother.

I did an extensive search of items related to Camp Drum and cannot see any associated documentation with the base that James's body was ever recovered.

George Woltjen

Missing: 10/24/92, Pine, NY

Age at disappearance: 60 years

Point of Separation* Illness/ Disability

George was a baker by occupation. He lived in Glendale in Brooklyn but also enjoyed the outdoors and was a longtime hunter. The sixty-year-old baker and four other friends traveled to Indian Lake and then made a trip six miles into the wilderness to look for deer, stopping at Pine Lake near the Cedar River. The men decided to split up to hunt and meet back at camp at the end of the day. George never made the late-afternoon meeting.

George vanished from an area that has dozens of small lakes and ponds and several peaks that summit near two to three thousand feet. The men were approximately ten miles southwest of Newcomb.

The New York Department of Conservation, US forest rangers, New York State troopers, and a variety of volunteers spent weeks looking for George without finding a clue.

There were no developments in the George Woltjen disappearance until almost four years later. A May 22 article in the Adirondack Journal explained what was found: "The body was discovered late on May 8 by two fishermen, but because of the remoteness of the area,

the authorities were not notified until the morning of May 9." The same article contained this information about the body: "An autopsy was conducted at the Albany Medical Center by Doctors Barbara Wolf and Lowell Lavine, forensic pathologists, and the cause of death was determined to be asphyxia because of drowning. The death was ruled accidental."

I read this article four times and then walked into the next room to tell a family member. A body is found almost four years after it disappears, the body is found in a remote river, and there is enough left of the body to conduct an autopsy and determine a cause of death: is this possible? I could believe this possibility in the far Canadian north where rivers run ice cold year round, but in New York? I am not doubting the findings of the pathologists, but I'm questioning that the body could've been in the water for four years and found in condition su icient for autopsy.

George did have an ailment: he was diabetic. Searchers never found George's rifle, supplies that were with him, coat, nothing. This area of northern New York has as many strange and unusual disappearances as any region in North America. Start plotting these disappearances on Google Earth, and you'll understand my concern.

Mark Perri

Missing: 10/20/2006, Cheviot Landing, New York

Age at disappearance: 39 years Water» Unknown Cause of Death

I have rarely documented the disappearance of a duck hunter. This person went missing in Cheviot Landing, New York. The landing is located approximately twenty miles north of Poughkeepsie on the Hudson River and about ten miles east of the Big Indian Wilderness Area.

Mark Perri was the consummate outdoorsman. He loved to hunt deer, turkey, and duck. In September 2006 he had purchased a small, older boat that he had made into an e ective watercraft to take him to his homemade duck blind. He was a carpenter by trade and was very good with wood and his hands. He was engaged to his girlfriend of nine years, Tamaica Haith, with a tentative wedding date set for around Christmas 2004. She had an eleven-year-old daughter, Faelin, that he treated like his own.

On October 20,2006, Mark went to the dock in Saugerties, picked up his boat, and made the journey to his duck blind in Cheviot Landing near Germantown. This was on the east side of the Hudson River.

At 6:00 p.m. friends and family started to become nervous. Mark was supposed to pick up Faelin and hadn't arrived. This was highly unusual as he was quite reliable. Faelin contacted her mom, and she tried to contact Mark, unsuccessfully. It wasn't long before search-and-rescue was notified.

Mark's hunting friends were supposed to meet him the following morning and did arrive at the residence. They knew where his blind was located and assisted in finding it for authorities. A November 2, 2006, article in the Poughkeepsie Journal had these details: "Authorities said Perri was hunting on Cheviot Landing on the Hudson River near Germantown. Perri's duck blind was found with his gun still inside and his boat was nearby with several ducks cleaned and left aboard." This was a very odd scene to authorities.

Mark was known as a very experienced and careful hunter. He didn't take risks, and he knew the area well. Initially there was some speculation that he may have shot himself. This was quickly discounted because there was no blood in the area, and it appeared as though he had finished hunting. All indications showed that he was ready to leave the blind in his boat. It wouldn't make any sense that he may have stumbled into a crime since his most valuable item— his gun—was still at the blind.

Law enforcement had helicopters and civil air patrol planes scanning the Hudson River for days. They interviewed fellow hunters and

relatives to gain an understanding of the man.

Searches continued for weeks, o icially and uno icially. On November 15,2006, at approximately 1:30 p.m., an Ulster County sheri 's boat found Mark's body in the Hudson near Tivoli. The body had traveled just one half of a mile in almost four weeks. A November 16, 2006, article in the Poughkeepsie Journal had this statement about what may have happened: '"We don't really know what happened to him,' Williams stated, crying. 'This just makes it so final.'"

Two articles that I found stated that there was no obvious trauma on the body and the sheri hadn't decided if there was going to be an autopsy. In my years of law enforcement in California, all dead bodies that were not attended by a physician had to go through autopsy. I don't understand how the decision to do an autopsy can be so subjective. In my humble opinion, this makes no sense.

The last book I wrote before this was Missing 411: A Sobering Coincidence. In that book I describe a series of deaths of men who seemed to end up in rivers, ponds, creeks, and reservoirs under unexplained circumstances. Several of those victim's bodies ended up in the Hudson River in New York. Forensics showed that they disappeared and were later found in an area where a current could not take them, and other cases showed the victim wasn't in the water the entire time they had been missing. This was only divulged through the smart work of New York City detectives and coroner investigators. Without an autopsy this would never have been revealed. I do think it's coincidental that Mark went missing under unusual circumstances on a river with a history of this activity. To make it clear, the Hudson wasn't the only river with this unusual type of activity; there were several in many states.

Thomas Messick

Missing: 11/15/2015, 2:00 p.m., Horicon, NY Age at disappearance: 82 years

Weather« Disability« Point of Separation« Canines« Cluster Zone

The Adirondack region of northern New York has always intrigued me. I have documented many disappearances in this region that defies conventional explanations. In Missing 411: Eastern United States, I wrote about a case where a young boy went missing while in the woods and the Green Berets were requested to search for him. (I have documented only two instances where they have ever participated in a

search in the United States.) The canines supposedly tracked his scent thirty miles through New York before losing it in a swamp: an incredible distance for a man to travel, let alone a young boy. He was never found.

In previous books, I have stated that it appears that people with some form of disability seem to disappear at higher rates than people without. Tn this incident, the victim had several limitations.

MISSING

Thomas E Messick

82 Years Old
5 Foot 10 Inch 160 lbs

Last seen on November 15, 2015 in the area of Lily Pond
Town of Horicon

Wearing Camouflage Jacket, Coveralls and Red & Black Plaid Hat

If you have any information, please call:
DEC Forest Rangers
(518)897-1300

Thomas Messick

Troy, New York, is a northern suburb of Albany, where Thomas Messick was married for 56 years to Beverly, and they raised three kids. When he was young, he was a member of the Eighty-Second Airborne Paratroopers. He worked for years at a local business and was retired but continued to teach hunter-safety courses. He loved the outdoors and truly enjoyed hunting, fishing, and camping. Thomas lost one eye several years earlier and had lost some of his hearing and had heart issues. He had friends that would encourage him to get out and hunt, and they would help him in that e ort. He was part of a group of friends and hunters that owned a hunting lodge just northeast of Brant Lake, New York. In early November of 2015,

Thomas made the seventy-mile drive north on Highway 87 until he reached Horicon where he drove east to his lodge and met his friends. In earlier days the guys would hunt the area around their lodge, property rights stopped that practice.

The guys were at their lodge when one of the members, Sid Sharpe stated that he knew of state hunting grounds above Brant Lake that few people frequented. He told the guys that they could drive right to the hunting spot and spend a few hours in the woods.

On November 15, 2015, Thomas dressed in green camouflaged pants and a coat and was also wearing a black-and-red-checkered cap. He was carrying a 30-30 pump action shotgun, four extra rounds, and also had a walkie-talkie to talk with hunting companions. The group left the lodge and drove to the state grounds.

Thomas and his five companions drove as far as they could toward Lily Lake, exited their cars, and developed a plan, and it was noon. The group decided that Thomas, Sid, Joe Capiselli and Al (Unknown last name) would walk into the woods, take a seat, and then the other three younger men (one being Thomas' son, Rob Messick) would fan out in a wide area and drive deer toward the group of four. One of the younger hunters walked with Thomas to the point where he was going to sit and then returned to flush deer. All had agreed to meet back at the cars at 2:00 p.m. The hunters were seated approximately 100 yards apart, within eyesight (150 feet) of the dirt access road and probably not more than one mile from Lily Lake.

At 2:00 p.m. everyone arrived back at the vehicles but Thomas. Two men walked back into the woods to escort him out and could not locate him. The other men joined and searched and also could not find their friend. Each hunter tried multiple times to reach Thomas on his radio; there was never a response. One of the guys drove into Horicon and notified o icers with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that they needed assistance finding a fellow hunter. At 4:30 p.m., rangers had been notified and were arriving on the scene. The hunters did shoot three rounds in the air to get a response. There was no return fire.

Three men stayed in the woods the entire night keeping the truck lights shining into the forest. They honked the horn constantly and fired o rounds several times.

The search for Thomas Messick started normally and quickly turned strange. DNR did a quick search and then started calling for

reinforcements. It would appear that they were suspicious from the beginning. They were told that Thomas was an older man, wouldn't go far, and had medical issues. They were expecting to find him lost or dead from medical complications and they were under the belief the search would be short.

I spent an afternoon with Rob Messick discussing this incident. He repeatedly said that this hunt was nothing of complexity or distance. Thom's son said that the night of the disappearance he called his mom, Beverly Messick and told her that dad was missing, but everything would be ok, they will find him. Rob said he was quite sure that his dad would be located quickly. He was one of the searchers from the start of the SAR. One of the last questions I asked Rob, did anyone see any wildlife in the woods that day? He stated, "no."

On the fifth day of the search, a very surprising agency showed up at the scene. FBI agents were at the command post monitoring the investigation and search along with the New York Police Special Operations Response Team. This seemed like a very odd group to be interested in an eighty-two-year-old missing hunter with no evidence of foul play. If you are new to reading my books, you need to know that in the cases of missing people I have identified, FBI agents sometimes arrive at the scene and appear to watch. The FBI has a large group in their profiling unit. Agents in the field write reports about incidents; they are forwarded to profiling, and they attempt to put like cases together. Understand, the FBI works criminal cases: why would they be interested in an elderly hunter? The reason, is that this area of New York has many more disappearances than the vast majority of the United States. I believe that the FBI is trying to understand what is happening.

The area being searched was the Lake George Wild Forest adjacent to Lily Pond. A routine search for any hunter usually lasts five to seven days. O icials were still in the field looking for Thomas until the end of January. The region had many ponds and beaver flows. The New York State Police dive team cleared all water in the area. Bloodhounds were brought into the search early in the e ort and were unable to track any scent. As many as 265 searchers were at the scene searching for the hunter on any one day. The state police committed helicopter time for several days, and DNR had up to twenty rangers supervising and organizing searches. In total, over ten thousand search hours were committed to finding Thomas.

The locals in Horicon made several statements to the press about

Thomas' vanishing act. This March 12, 2016, article titled "Without a Trace, Hunter Missing Since November 15", in Outdoor News expressed some of the feelings: '"They have found nothing. It's a mystery,' said Horicon town supervisor Matt Simpson, an avid hunter." The consensus of the community was disbelief that he hadn't been found.

One of the people I interviewed was Sid Sharpe, the hunter who decided that the group should be in this area and the person who was seated in the forest with Thom. I met Sid at his home and was greeted warmly. He told me that his family and Thom's had done things together for decades. They had fished, camped and hunted together for more years then he could count. He stated that Thom was someone that everyone liked; he was warm, polite and thoughtful. I asked Sid if anything unusual happened when he was out in the woods next to Thom; he looked at me oddly and said, "yes." He explained that after about an hour in the woods he heard something in front of him, up on the hill that he'd never heard before in fifty years of hunting. The sound was maybe 150 yards away and was something similar to a loud "zap." The sound was quick, loud and it was over. I asked him if he told authorities about the sound? He stated that he had, but nobody seemed to take him seriously. It was at this point that I could tell that Sid was bothered by what he heard and I think he was pleased that someone wanted to listen. As I was talking to Sid, his son, also named Sid walked in.

Sid Jr. agreed to talk with me about what happened to Thom and explained that he had known the hunter for his entire life and considered him his uncle. He described that he was a very knowledgeable outdoorsman, knew proper safety procedures in the woods and had taught Sid Jr's hunter safety course. He said that once he heard that Thom was missing, he immediately got into his car, drove to the scene and spent five days searching. The search was complex and lengthy. Sid Jr remembers searching swamps and waterways up to his chest to ensure that nothing was overlooked. The searchers stood close enough to each other that they could see the other's knees. I asked Sid Jr what he thought may have happened, and he said no plausible scenario made sense. He did not believe that Thom was in the woods.

I had the distinct pleasure to meet Beverly Messick at the home she and Thom shared. As I approached the front door, I noticed a small dog was sitting in the window watching as I approached. I later learned that the dog was Thom's; he sits in the window daily looking for his master's return.

Beverly is a broken person who has had little news from any authority about the status of her husband's case. She told me that as soon as Rob called and explained the disappearance, she left her home immediately and stayed at the command center for the entirety of the search. Beverly showed me pictures of a lifetime in the outdoors as a family unit, and it was a blissful outlook on the way life should be. Bev had tears in her eyes as she described her husband and his good-natured way. I asked her if Thom would've ever gotten up from his position in the woods and wandered? She stated that there was no way, Thom would have held his position seated and waited for the group to meet back at the trucks. I asked her if she had any conversations with the agencies that were at the scene? Mrs. Messick stated that two FBI agents approached her. She explained that they said, "Something was definitely not right, but unless and until they made a recovery, they wouldn't know what it was."

This incident happened in Warren County, New York. I traveled to the Warren County Sheri 's O ice and met with their SAR commander on Thom's case and the undersheri in the county, Shawn Lamouree. He explained that his department responded with their special response team, which he commanded. The woods were searched multiple times and placed in grids by string hung on trees and worked in a criss-cross manner; not one inch was overlooked. I asked Shawn if he had seen any wildlife in the forest, he said, "no." I asked if the fact he hadn't seen any wildlife during the search in this part of his county was odd? The undersheri stated he thought not seeing any animals was odd. I also asked him if he knew who called the FBI or why they were there? He stated that he believed they were there to o er technological support. He said that he had no idea who called them, but he never had any contact with either agent. He guessed that 50-60 agencies participated in the SAR and hundreds of ground searchers.

Readers may want to go back and read the case of Robert Smith from Garfield Plantation, Maine, again. I see several glaring similarities between victims:

- Both men over seventy years old
- Had severe disabilities
- Lifelong hunters
- Went missing between two and 2:30 p.m.
- One disappeared on November 15; the other, November 18

• Searchers didn't believe either man could walk far

• Extensive searches failed to locate anything of either man

• Never found

Think about the facts surrounding this event. A very seasoned hunter disappears with a walkie-talkie. Fellow hunters knew precisely where he was going and knew he had limited mobility. He had a shotgun with extra rounds. No shots were heard. Thousands of hours of searching by humans, helicopters, and bloodhounds find nothing.

The highly unusual facts surrounding this event didn't get past the FBI. They realized something was unusual, and that's why they were there. I'd like to read their report. It's been almost twenty years since Robert Smith disappeared, he's never been found. I can guarantee that the search for Thomas Messick was exhaustive and complex. I do not believe that his body was there when the search was terminated.

This is one of the cases we covered in our movie, Missing 411- The Hunted.

Oregon

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

09/16/25-p.m.* 50* M

10/15/50* 67*M

11/21/53* 40*M

12/05/61* 16*M

10/07/62* 60*M

Martin Owensby Lester 10/08/69* 78*M

Barger Charles Warner 10/10/1977-5:00 p.m.22*M

James McCormick Frank

Brentano Robert Winters 11/23/91* 17*M

Samuel Ipock Corey Fay 10/17/2004-4:30 p.m.31*M Jeromy Childress Steve Litsey 10/29/2011- 71-M

Martin Owensby

Missing: 09/16/25- p.m., Prospect, OR

Age at disappearance: 50 years

Cluster Zone* Berries* Weather

The more I researched this story, the more I became intrigued. I spent hours trying to determine exactly where this incident happened, when I did, I was floored.

In past books, I have documented the association of missing people and berries. Some individuals were berry picking when they vanished, others were found in a berry patch, and still, others were eating berries just before the incident. I have also documented that the one berry that is most often associated with these cases is Huckleberries. This case happened on Huckleberry Mountain in Oregon.

Merrill Oregon is a small farming and ranching community that sits just two miles north of the California border. In September of 1925, fifty-year-old Martin Owensby lived on the family ranch and took care of his mom and their property. The family also had a cabin just seven miles west of Crater Lake on Huckleberry Mountain.

On September 15, 1925, Martin and his mom were spending a much-needed break up at their cabin. Martin had brought his horse and regularly hunted deer and picked huckleberries for the family. The cabin was in a remote setting and rarely did they see others casually pass by. The hunter and berry picker rode his horse into the woods in the morning and was going to pick berries and possibly hunt as is described in this statement from his mom in the September 22, 1925 article in the Klamath News, “Wednesday afternoon he had been out hunting deer and picking huckleberries. While he was in the woods, his horse strayed away from him. He returned to camp on foot and in time for supper. After supper, he built a log blaze in the fireplace. He seemed uneasy about his horse. Finally, he decided to go down to Squaw Flat country believing his horse had wandered down there, where grazing is good. He took his rifle with him. That is the last I seen of him.” Mrs. Owensby was frantic when Martin hadn’t returned that night. She was essentially stranded at their remote cabin.

A day after Martin failed to arrive home, a group of Native Americans was passing by, and Mrs. Owensby asked them for assistance in finding her son. The group banded together, got more help and sent one to town to tell the sheri . It wasn’t until September 26 that news

of this event reached Merrill and farmers and ranchers responded to assist their neighbor. A September 23, 1925 article in the Medford Mail Tribune had these details searchers were going to face, “It was a week ago tonight that Owensby disappeared and since then a severe storm has raged thru the mountains.”

Three days after the disappearance, Indian searchers found Martin’s horse near Squaw Flat with his gun securely in the saddle horn. There was no indication where the son might be located. There was more news about searching help as is documented in the September 27, 1925 edition of the Klamath News, “A half-brother of Owensby, Clay Cann, a deputy sheri from Sacramento arrived in Klamath Falls yesterday and immediately proceeded to the huckleberry district where he hopes to catch up with the searching party who left earlier in the morning.”

Even though the area of this search was huge and the country challenging to travel, the Merrill residents showed up in significant numbers. They had a start point, Squaw Flat, but they were at least ten days behind the event. The search was extensive for the time (ten days) and they found nothing. The formal search was terminated on October 4 without Martin being located. There was this comment about the missing hunter in the September 22, 1925, edition of the Klamath News, “Owensby knows the Huckleberry country perhaps better than any other human being, and his mother was confident he’d work his way out.” The key to this statement, Martin did not get lost and die. It also doesn’t make sense that he ran into a criminal and was killed, or they would’ve taken his rifle and horse.

A couple of items are critical to me on this incident. Going back earlier in the day when he vanished, his horse disappeared or was spooked. Country people and outdoorsman have a special bond with their horse, and it takes something serious to frighten the animal into abandoning him. Could the spooking of his horse be related to the vanishing? This incident happened in a very large geographical cluster zone, Crater Lake. The numbers of cases in this area are significant. Native Americans made statements in the 1800’s that they did not like traveling through this area.

If you spread cases out by a few generations, people living in the area will forget, and they won’t see the relationship. On September 21, 2002, Jerry Mckoen was a rancher living in Merrill Oregon. He was living with his mother and taking care of their family land. Early that day Jerry left to go bow hunting on the east side of Mount Shasta and was never found. The story appears on page 95 of Missing 411

Western United States.

Let's compare the similarities:

Name: Age: Jerry Mckoen 48 Martin Owensby 50

Status:

Single Single

of Incident: Lived with Mother Lived with Mother Home: Month

Merrill, OR Merrill, OR

September September

Occupation: Rancher Rancher

Case

Status: Never Found Never Found

Activity: Hunting Hunting

Seventy-seven years and five days later, history repeated itself in Merrill Oregon.

Lester Barger

Missing: 10/15/50, seventeen miles west of Vemonia, OR

Age at disappearance: 67 years

Point of Separation*

When I was in high school, I spent two summers attending basketball camp in Vernonia. It was an isolated camp that focused on getting high-school players to the next level of their play. It never got me there, but it was still a great camp. I have tremendous memories of this area as it was lush, thick forest and filled with deer. I can remember that every afternoon the deer would come out of the surrounding forest and onto our fields. This is the region where the next incident occurred.

In October 1950, Lester Barger was married to his wife, Minnie, and lived in Portland. The couple had eight children: Herbert, William, Willard, Harold, Donald, Marie, Francis, and Robert.

On October 15,1950, Lester was in an area called the Tillamook Burn Area seventeen miles west of Vernonia, Oregon. Vernonia is essentially halfway between Portland and the west coast; it's in a very rural area without any large cities in the vicinity.

Lester was deer hunting with five of his sons. The region was described as wet and muddy because of recent storms. The exact area that the men were in was near Elsie Creek in a rocky area near the Tillamook and Clatsop County line. At some point during the day, the hunters decided to split up and meet later at a designated location. Lester never arrived.

The Barger boys searched for their dad while another went to get assistance. The Oregon State Police called almost immediately for the National Guard and for additional volunteer searchers. The boys searched daily right along with other searchers. The National Guard brought in special vehicles to drive volunteers deep into the woods. A seven-day search found no evidence of Lester's whereabouts. The search was terminated at that point.

Even though the formal search was over, the Barger boys continued searching for another six days. They eventually left the area, defeated in the e ort to locate their dad. Searching a burn area is not like searching an area of thick foliage. A bum area indicates that the region had gone through a serious burn o . The reports did indicate that part of the area searched was thick with trees and ferns. The vast majority of the search area could not have been thick with trees.

I was able to find notations made sixty years after the disappearance that Lester was never found.

Charles Warner

Missing: 11/21/53, Umatilla National Forest, Tollgate, OR

Age at disappearance: 40 years

Point of Separation* Weather

Charles Warner and a friend traveled to the Umatilla National Forest from his home in Sisters, Oregon, for elk hunting. The men went to a region five miles south of Tollgate and entered the wilderness o a rural road. His partner last saw Charles on Saturday, approximately one mile into the woods.

Charles didn't return to meet his buddy, and o icials were immediately

notified. Weather conditions were hazardous, and there was snow falling. Charles's two sons did respond to the search location and assisted in looking for their father. Airplanes, the US Forest Service, the county sheri , and volunteers all scoured the wilderness looking for the hunter; they found nothing. The organized search for Charles Warner was terminated on November 29, 1953.

Considering that Charles walked into the wilderness from his vehicle and was not camped in the woods makes this case unusual. Mr. Warner was limited in the distance from the roadway he could travel, based on the confirmed observation made by his hunting partner. The search parameters were set in a region near the hunter's vehicle. He should have been found.

James McCormick

Missing: 12/05/61, Larch Mountain, Multnomah Falls, OR

Age at disappearance: 16 years

Water* Canines* Weather* Illness/ Disability* Missing Clothing/ Shoes

Multnomah Falls is approximately thirty miles east of downtown Portland. It sits adjacent to the Columbia River and is one of the most beautiful waterfalls you will ever see. The area to the south of the falls is Larch Mountain; this area is very rugged and wild.

On December 4, 1961, James McCormick Sr., his son, and their hunting dog left their Portland residence for a bobcat shoot at Larch Mountain. Mr. McCormick was on vacation from his job as a fire inspector for the city of Portland and enjoyed the outdoors. Even though Larch Mountain was only thirty miles from a metropolitan setting, don't let that fool you; it gets very wild very quickly in this region of the Pacific Northwest.

The first day they were hunting, the weather started to turn bad. The first indicator of cold striking the area was a heavy rain, which was soon followed by snow that blanketed Larch Mountain. The three were temporarily lost and spent the night huddled under a tree for protection. The next morning, they started back out but were again lost. And for some unknown reason, James Jr. became "delirious," according to a December 4, 1961, article in the Eugene-Register. James Sr. carried his 215-pound son for three hours before he became exhausted and laid him down. He told the boy to stay put while he went to investigate what he thought were car lights. He returned to

the area in just minutes and found the boy had disappeared. James Sr. searched for his son for almost an hour and then left to get help. Many hours later James Sr. stumbled into the Multnomah Falls Lodge.

Two hundred o -duty firefighters from Portland responded to assist in the search for James Jr. The sheri 's department searchers used canines and planes to search the mountain. Searchers found the case for the boy's glasses, and his socks and boots were found somewhat near where his father had lost the boy. Later in the day, searchers found James's body at the bottom of a slight cli three hundred yards from where they had found his clothing. He was dead.

The appearance of the body made searchers believe that he didn't die from a fall. Several articles stated that James Jr. may have died from exposure, but there was no definitive statement.

Summary

Many questions arise from this case, and many of the facts mimic those found throughout this book: people are out in the woods with a dog; the weather turns bad; one person becomes dazed or delirious, gets lost, and later loses articles of clothing. The lost person is later found: sometimes alive, sometimes not. I am interested in the statement made by Mr. McCormick about seeing lights and going to search for them. What kind of lights would he see in the middle of the wilderness that could be mistaken for headlights?

Frank Brentano

Missing: 10/07/62, Wasco, OR

Age at disappearance: 60 years

Point of Separation» Canines» Weather»

The area of this incident is a mere twenty miles northeast from the disappearance of Corey Fay (see the entry below). To get to this region, the victim had to drive by Larch Mountain, the location of the James McCormick incident.

On October 5, 1962, Mr. and Mrs. Fran Brentano left their Portland home and drove east on Highway 84 along the Columbia River, which separates Washington from Oregon. You travel from a thick and lush area of big trees to an area of desolation, no trees and open fields. The Brentano's arrived at their hunting cabin late Friday afternoon and established themselves for the weekend.

On Sunday morning, October 7, Frank left the location in the early-morning hours, telling his wife he'd be back by lunch. He never arrived. Mrs. Brentano contacted the Wasco County sheri . He immediately started to gather his team and volunteers to search. He also summoned bloodhound teams to the scene. Mrs. Brentano told the sheri that her husband was an excellent hunter and woodsman with decades of experience in the wild. He was dressed warmly and armed with a rifle.

For almost three days, the sheri had equestrians in the field and ground teams. The bloodhounds never found a scent to track. An October 10,1962, article in the News-Review explained more obstacles: "Drenching rain that left the forests soggy and roads slick hampered a search southwest of here today for missing Portland hunter Frank Brentano, 60." I've been through Wasco several times and have never seen "forests." I have no idea why or who mentioned that to the news crew. The area has very little high or thick ground cover.

On October 10,1962, the sheri terminated the search for Frank after just two and a half days. I did an extensive search for documents and cannot find anything stating that he was ever found.

Robert Winters

Missing: 10/08/69, Sparks Lake, OR

Age at disappearance: 78 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Clothes Removed*

Robert Winters was a retired logger, a family man, and an ardent hunter who enjoyed the outdoors. He and his sons—Charles, George, and Alvin—had hunted the area of Sparks Lake for twenty years. The Lake is twenty miles east of Bend and just a quarter mile southeast of Devils Lake. It sits at an elevation of 5,400 feet.

In early October 1969, the Winters men headed for Sparks Lake to make camp for their annual deer hunting trip. At approximately 11 :00 a.m. on October 8, the boys last saw their dad. The boys thought

their dad would be hunting in the same general area they were—bounded by Soda Creek, Broken Top, Fall Creek, and their campsite at Sparks Lake. When Robert failed to return to camp at dark, the boys became concerned and started to search. Just as the night started to set in, snow started to fall, and it fell heavily till the next morning. Almost eighteen inches of snow dropped during the first twenty-four hours that Robert was missing.

The Winters contacted the Deschutes County Sheri ’s O ice, and a search was immediately started. Robert’s sons explained that they usually hunted at a higher altitude, but the amount of snow on the ground forced them down to Sparks Lake. They group had agreed to stay lower to hunt.

According to the sheri ’s o ice, sixty people were utilized for the search. At one point a helicopter was utilized. Those on board the chopper thought they saw some type of tracks at nearly 7,100 feet near Soda Creek. The tracks were discounted because nobody thought Robert would walk that high in snow that deep; it was too di icult and dangerous. The search was terminated after the fifth day without finding a trace of the hunter.

Nothing happened in the Robert Winter case until nine months later when a physician on vacation found a peculiar site near Soda Creek. Dr. Jack Crosby, of Bend, was looking for a campsite when he found a deer rifle, glasses, clothing, and other items just o the creek. Crosby notified the sheri ’s department, and Deputies Mel Newhouse and Norman Thrasher responded.

I was able to interview Thrasher, who is now retired. He spent twenty-eight years with the Deschutes County Sheri ’s O ice and stated that he would not ever forget the scene just o Soda Creek. Thrasher stated that it was just below timberline in an area of large trees. Tree coverage in the region was spotty, but in this location, there was a thick forest. The rifle was leaning against a tree, and clothes were at the base of the tree, along with glasses, one boot, one glove, and other items. He and Deputy Newhouse spent three days onsite searching for evidence of what happened to Robert. One of their first jobs was to methodically search the area around the tree to ensure they didn’t miss any evidence—bones, other personal e ects, and so forth. Everything they had found was near the base of the tree. For three days they looked for bones, but they found nothing to confirm that Robert had died. There was no blood visible on the clothes, and it appeared as though the clothes had possibly been removed from the body, not torn o .

When I asked Thrasher if he thought the scene looked odd, he stated, “Very odd.” He clarified that this was one of the weirdest cases he had ever investigated. I asked him if there were any animals that would totally consume a human body (and the bones) and leave nothing behind. He said no. I asked him if he had an explanation of why Robert’s body was gone but his clothes and personal e ects were left behind. He stated, “I have no idea. This is one of the major peculiarities about this case.” When I asked him how convinced he was that he and Newhouse adequately searched the entire area for other evidence, he stated that there was nothing else to recover; there were no bones anywhere in that area. He said that for three days they did nothing but scan the ground for bits of evidence to indicate that Robert Winters had died. Thrasher also stated that the family needed a death certificate to finalize personal issues, but the local coroner refused it for almost a year. The coroner wanted a skull or other evidence to indicate a confirmation of death, but they didn’t have it. He did state that there was no way that Robert was alive: he had no clothes, and there was almost six feet of snow in the area where his personal e ects were found.

Summary

A July 21, 1970, article in the Bulletin Newspaper stated that searchers did find Robert Winters’s dentures and personal e ects near Soda Creek. There was an old cabin in the area, but it was not utilized by Robert. Imagine that dentures are found but the body is not. Does this mean that something removed Robert’s dentures?

This is another in the long list of cases where clothing is removed from someone who is missing. This is also a case where someone walked up in elevation when they were missing, into heavier, deeper snow and more treacherous conditions. With the knowledge that Robert Winters hunted this exact area for twenty years, and with the fact that he was seventy-eight years old, it is hard to believe that he voluntarily climbed higher and into his demise, especially after telling his sons he would hunt at a lower elevation. SAR teams know that missing people rarely go higher in elevation when they are missing or when weather is turning sour.

An interesting question is, whose tracks did the helicopter pilot spot at 7,100 feet just after Robert went missing? Surely, they were not his. He was too old and smart to go that high that quickly and risk death by exposure.

Samuel Ipock

Missing: 10/10/1977, 5:00 p.m., northeast of Tumalo Falls, OR Age at disappearance: 22 years

Point of Separation« Canines« Boulders« Previously Searched

You are going to read about a man who should have never disappeared and should have never fallen o a cli and a search team that was completely ba led about where he was found. This story will make little sense.

Samuel Ipock was born June 13, 1955, in Bend, Oregon. He was born to be an outdoorsman, and he followed that path. He spent time hunting and being in the great outdoors with his father, uncle, and friends. He took an occupation as a timber faller, which placed him in the middle of desolate country, something he enjoyed.

On October 10, 1977, Samuel and his father, Harry, went to an area northeast of Tumalo Falls to hunt. Samuel had been to this special location many times and knew it quite well. In the afternoon hours, Harry and Samuel split up to hunt with the agreement to meet back at camp before dark. Samuel never came back. Four hours after the agreed-upon meeting time, Harry called the Deschutes County sheri , who in turn called the county search-and-rescue team.

The search for Samuel was not able to start until the morning of October 11 because of the rugged and dangerous topography of the area. On Wednesday morning, reporters interviewed a search coordinator, who gave this statement in the October 12 edition of The Bulletin: "'It's a real puzzling situation,' search coordinator Frank Earl said Wednesday morning. 'Ipock is in excellent physical condition; he knows the area well and is an avid hunter.'" The weather in the area at the time of the disappearance and immediately after was cloudy and cold. The search e ort included planes, bloodhounds, dozens of ground searchers, and cars patrolling the outer perimeter.

Just after noon on Thursday, October 13, witnesses saw birds circling in an area beneath cli s that had been searched dozens of times. This was an area where Samuel may have been hunting, thus the big e ort in the area. Samuel's uncle, Carl Ipock, went to the area and, to his shock, found his nephew's body. A coroner's report indicated that Samuel had major head and neck trauma. It was theorized that Samuel fell o a 100-foot cli and then slipped another 195 feet down a steep, boulder-strewn decline. According to an October 14 article in The Bulletin, "Ipock's body was found in an area searched extensively by ground crews, dogs and aircraft. Searchers Wednesday scoured the

area around the cli s without finding a trace of the body." This is a pretty clear statement that searchers were stunned by where they found Samuel. Later in the article, it states: "Much progress had been made and the crews had all but ruled out the cli area." The teams of searchers were focusing their e orts at the base of the cli s, not on top of the cli s, because his dad knew he would not hunt in that area. This is another excerpt from the same Bulletin article: "Ipock was last seen Monday evening when he and his father separated to hunt the area surrounding the cli s. Ipock's disappearance puzzled authorities because he was reputed to be an experienced hunter who knew the area well. Searchers say they are still puzzled as to why he was on the cli s in the first place."

You will read many articles in my books where people are allegedly falling o cli s even though close family members don't believe they would've been in that area, just as in this case.

This region of the Cascades has a horrid history of disappearances and deaths of hikers and hunters, deaths and disappearances that cannot be logically explained.

Corey Fay

Missing: 11/23/91, 6:30 p.m., west of Tygh Valley, OR Age at disappearance: 17 years

Point of Separation* Canines* Missing/ Removed Clothing

The disappearance of Corey Fay, a student at Jesuit High School in Beaverton, Oregon, ranks as one of the most unusual disappearances involving a teenager.

Corey was a junior in high school when he asked Mark Maupin if he could accompany him and his friend elk hunting in a region west of Tygh Valley on the fringe of the Badger Creek Wilderness. Mark was a good friend and agreed to bring Corey along. Corey had training in outdoor survival and had hunted in the past. He knew what to do in case of emergency or if he was ever lost. He carried an emergency solar blanket, a compass, extra food, ammunition, a small backpack, and a rifle.

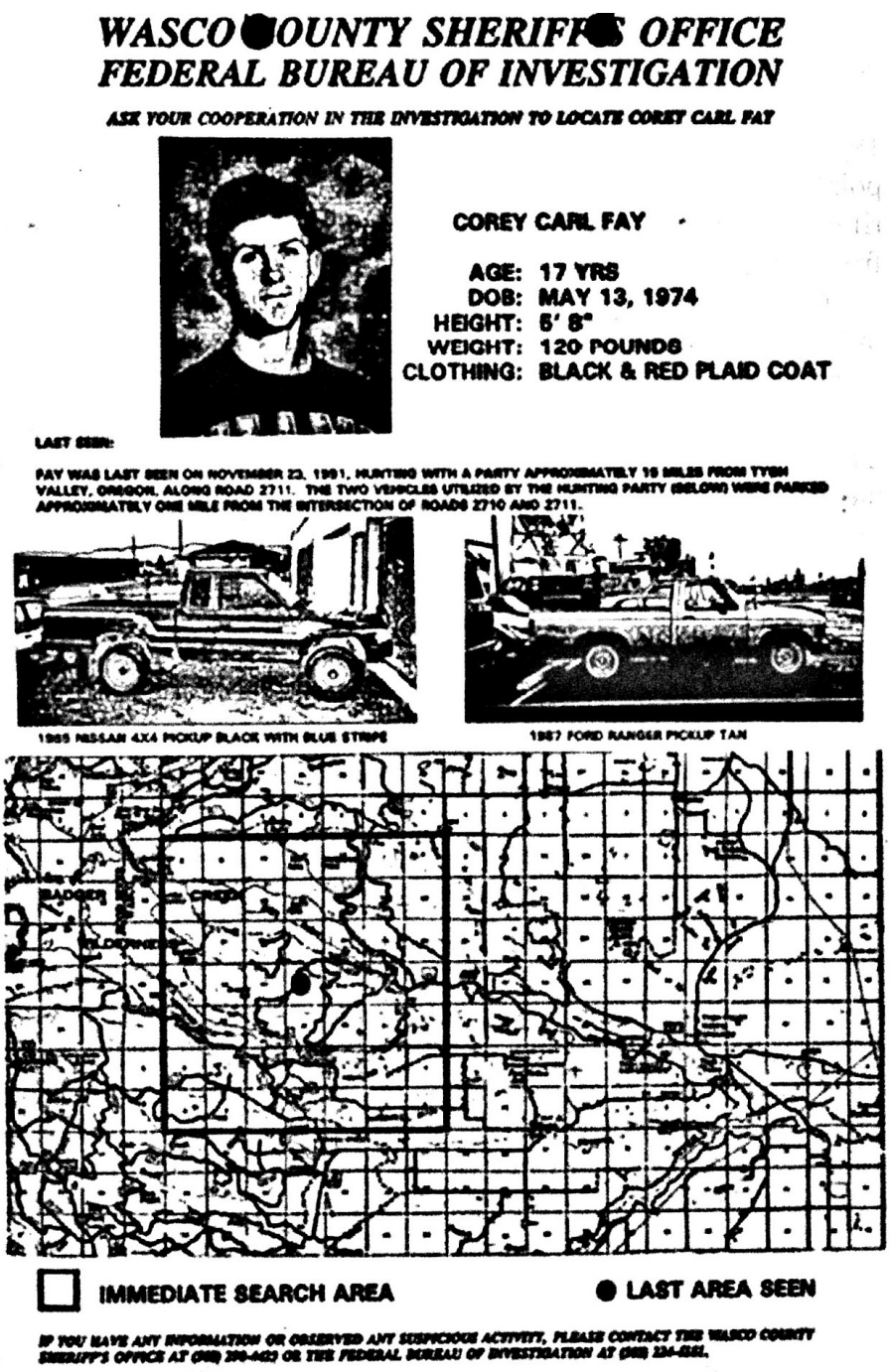
The three young men arrived at their hunting spot and decided to split up until 6:30 p.m., when they had agreed to arrive back at the vehicle. That was the last time anyone saw Corey.

The afternoon was cold, and the hunting, fruitless. Maupin later told

investigators that they were in the correct spot—a spot he knew there were elk—yet inexplicably they didn't see any. When they arrived back at their vehicle, Corey wasn't there. He never arrived, so they called the sheri .

The Wasco County Sheri 's O ice was the lead agency in the search for Corey. The SAR included helicopters with special search capabilities, equestrians, hikers, and seven of the best-trained search dogs in the world from the Rocky Mountain Search and Rescue in Salt Lake City. A total of two hundred fifty searchers scoured twelve square miles for ten days and did not find one trace of Corey Fay.

There were many theories about what happened to Corey. The one that got the most press proposed that he may have been accidentally killed by another hunter and buried; however, cadaver dogs never found a gravesite. There were also theories that Cory may have survived for a long time, and one searcher thought they may have found a campsite with an old fire, but this was never confirmed. With so many searchers and substantial air support on this SAR, it is doubtful that Corey lived long after he initially disappeared; otherwise, I believe they would have found him.


WASCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
ASK YOUR COOPERATION IN THE INVESTIGATION TO LOCATE COREY CARL FAY
COREY CARL FAY
AGE: 17 YRS
DOB: MAY 13, 1974
HEIGHT: 5' 8"
WEIGHT: 120 POUNDS
CLOTHING: BLACK & RED PLAID COAT
LAST SEEN:
FAY WAS LAST SEEN ON NOVEMBER 23, 1991, HUNTING WITH A PARTY APPROXIMATELY 15 MILES FROM TYGH VALLEY, OREGON, ALONG ROAD 2711. THE TWO VEHICLES UTILIZED BY THE HUNTING PARTY (BELOW) WERE PARKED APPROXIMATELY ONE MILE FROM THE INTERSECTION OF ROADS 2710 AND 2711.
1989 NISSAN 4X4 PICKUP BLACK WITH BLUE STRIPE
1987 FORD RANGER PICKUP TAN
IMMEDIATE SEARCH AREA
LAST AREA SEEN
IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION OR OBSERVED ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY, PLEASE CONTACT THE WASCO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE AT (503) 296-4625 OR THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION AT (503) 224-4181.

Corey Fay Wanted Poster

The o icial search was terminated on December 1, but many volunteers kept the e ort going for many weeks. The Wasco County sheri was so perplexed by Corey's disappearance and the lack of

evidence that they called the FBI and asked for their assistance in unraveling what happened.

There wasn't much activity on Corey's case until September 1992, when two hunters were hunting a ridge ten miles from the point where Corey was last seen. They found his backpack and his rifle. Another searcher found Corey's jacket more than a mile away from his other belongings. The hunters notified authorities.

Corey's items were located at an elevation of 6,500 feet and ten miles from where he was last seen. A quarter mile from his backpack, searchers found small bone fragments and one tooth. The sheri stated that Corey would have been in snow up to his waist for more than five miles at the point the discovery was made. An article in the Eugene-Register on September 18, 1992, reported the following: "Authorities know the snow was deep there because a helicopter had spotted tracks during an intensive search for Fay last November. The tracks turned out to be animals' but the snow was almost waist deep, and that was a good three miles from where the items were discovered yesterday." The article later states that searchers didn't believe Fay could have gone as far as he apparently did. An interesting sidenote to this finding is that a September 19, 1992, article in the Eugene-Register clearly states that Corey's grandparents told the press that the boy was trained to follow a stream downhill if he ever became lost. This is odd because the article makes you believe that Cory did just the opposite.

The sheri makes it clear that in November 1991 his helicopter crews did see tracks on the ridgeline near where Corey was found. He makes it sound as though they landed and determined they were animal tracks. However, if the snow in the area was new and four feet deep, no helicopter would land there because it would blow the snow—and evidence—away. This assertion by the sheri sounds like he really didn't know but was instead guessing.

Corey was found three thousand feet higher in elevation than where he was last seen and ten miles from the point he should have been hunting. Could he have covered this distance and elevation in less than a day in waist-deep snow? Remember, the sheri stated that he didn't believe Corey could have made it that far, and that's why the search didn't focus on this location. Was the sheri correct?

You may need to go back and again read what was found on the ridgeline. They did not find Corey's pants, boots, or socks. Boots are heavy, they don't disappear. What is equally unusual about the discovery of remnants of Corey's body is that no skull was found and

only one tooth could be located. This is all that was recovered, even though the sheri sent in thirty people to do grid searches of the ridgeline across a one-and-a-quarter-mile area. Searchers did not find large bones normally associated with finding a skeleton (femur, ribs, hip, vertebrae, etc.).

This case greatly disturbs me. The fact that searchers could only find bone fragments—no skull and only one tooth—is highly unusual. The fact that Corey's gun, backpack, and other personal belongings were strewn along a ridgeline strikes me as bizarre— nothing any hunter would voluntarily do. Corey's disappearance and the sheri 's lack of initially finding evidence was deemed unusual when the search was nearing completion. Corey was a smart young man. He was well trained and knew not to walk uphill. Anyone who has spent time outdoors in the winter knows that it gets colder the higher you go. Rain turns to snow, and that leads to hypothermia. Corey was trained to follow creeks and rivers downhill, which will eventually lead you to a roadway and civilization.

You will read about several hunters in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho that disappeared while elk hunting. Many of the facts of their disappearances do not make sense. As you read about these incidents, think about these facts and ask yourself: could these things have voluntarily occurred, or was there something else at play? I believe that the Wasco County sheri believed something highly unusual happened to Corey, something so unusual and so beyond his investigative ability that he got the FBI involved. Remember, the FBI does not get involved in any missing person cases unless there is some evidence of a crime, abduction, kidnapping, and so forth. Here is another case where the FBI got involved in a rural disappearance, yet law enforce-ment did not tell the press any facts justifying the FBI's involvement.

Questions to consider in this disappearance:

• Where are Corey's boots, socks, and pants?

• Why would Corey remove his coat?

• Why would Corey drop his firearm?

• Why would Corey do everything contrary to his survival training?

• Could Corey have walked three miles in waist-deep snow on a cold ridgeline, and why

would he if he looked below and saw there was no snow?

• Why would he even be on a ridgeline in cold weather?

• Why would he be ten miles from the point he needs to be at in a one-day hunting trip?

• Why would the sheri summon the FBI unless there was evidence of a crime?

Jeromy Childress

Missing: 10/17/2004, 4:30 p.m., Tillamook Forest, Trask Unit, OR

Age at disappearance: 31 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

Jeromy Childress was a man that loved the outdoors. His first outdoor joy was fishing, and that was closely followed by hunting.

In 1997 he was at a bar and met the first love of his life, Kristen. They dated for a few years and then married. In 2001 the couple had their first child, a daughter named Kelsey. Three years later Kristen got pregnant again, and she gave birth to a boy, Jesse. Jeromy had a dangerous job painting commercial bridges.

On Friday, October 15, 2004, Jeromy kissed Kristen and Kelsey good-bye and headed to work. Kristen knew she wouldn't see her husband until early the following week because he was headed elk hunting with his painting partner. After completing work on Friday, they departed for their hunting grounds.

Jeromy's work partner was thirty-five-year-old Shane Luey. Shane had decided to take his thirteen-year-old son, Shane Jr., with them. The trio took Jeromy's truck to the coastal region of Oregon in the Trask Unit of the Tillamook Forest between Tillamook and Beaver. This was approximately four miles east of the Pacific Ocean in a very thickly wooded region.

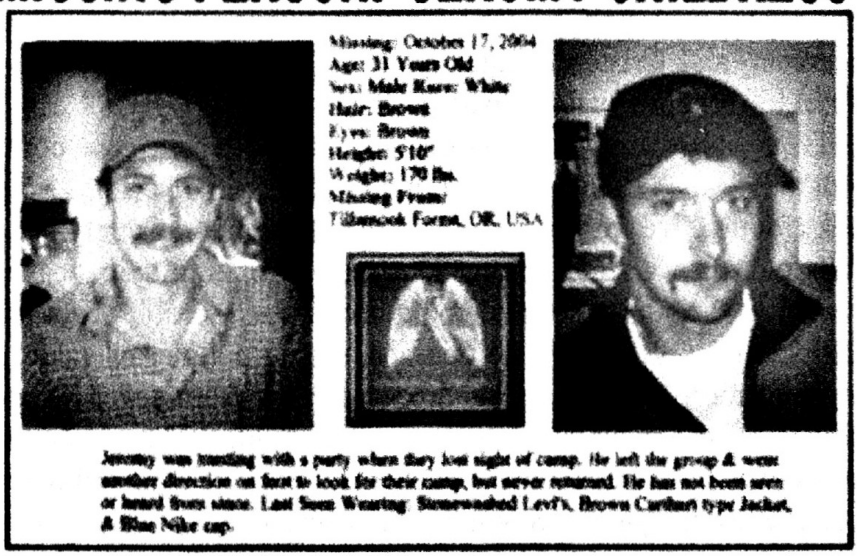
The trio reached their hunting grounds late Friday night and established camp. On Saturday they hunted. They got back to camp late and realized that they needed wood to burn for a fire. The group Jeromy Childress got into Jeromy's truck and started to go through the area, looking for wood. Fog and a light drizzle inundated the area and got the trio lost. They were very lost. Twenty-four hours after the

group left for firewood, they were still driving the truck and were low on fuel. Shane said that Jeremy was getting frustrated and believed their camp was just over the ridge from where they were. They stopped the truck and got out to hike. It got darker and colder, and Shane told investigators that his son got tired and afraid, and he decided to go back to the truck. Jeromy said he'd continue hiking to their camp and once there come back to get them.

HUNTER REMAINS MISSING

TILLAMOOK FOREST - TRASK UNIT

MISSING PERSON: JEROMY CHILDRESS


Missing: October 17, 2004
Age: 31 Years Old
Sex: Male Race: White
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown
Height: 5'10"
Weight: 170 lbs.
Missing From:
Tillamook Forest, OR, USA
Jeromy was traveling with a party when they lost sight of camp. He left the group & went another direction on foot to look for their camp, but never returned. He has not been seen or heard from since. Last Seen Wearing: Camouflaged Levi's, Brown Carhartt type Jacket, & Blue Nike cap.

ANY INFORMATION LEADING TO RECOVERY AS WELL AS CLOSURE FOR OUR FAMILY, PLEASE CONTACT:

TILLAMOOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
DEPUTY DEAN BURDICK
503-801-6345 or 503-815-1911
or call 911

On Monday morning a logger found Shane and his son and took them o the mountain to get assistance. Shane contacted law enforcement,

and Kristen eventually got a call at her Salem school district job that her husband was missing.

Tillamook County deputies determined that Jeromy was correct about the location of their camp, but he would've had to cross a deep creek (four to five feet deep) to get there. Tillamook County put on a full-court press to find Jeromy. Dog teams from multiple locations were brought to the scene and could not find a traceable scent trail. Multiple helicopters flew the treetops, seeing nothing of value. At one point there were three hundred searchers from seven Oregon counties on the mountain looking for the hunter. They knew that Jeromy was carrying a fully loaded rifle, pocketknife,- and a pack of cigarettes and gum. Deputies found one witness who reported hearing three rounds fired late Sunday night in rapid succession, an indicator of someone needing assistance. The deputies couldn't find the location of the rounds and didn't know if it was Jeromy.

Even after the original search for Jeromy had been terminated, months later, Kristen organized another one hundred volunteers to help search for her husband. That e ort found nothing of value. The only piece of evidence that any searcher ever found was one gum wrapper of the brand that Jeromy chewed. They never knew if it came from him.

Jeromy disappeared without the pack he'd normally carry because he hadn't planned on hunting. Remember, they went out looking for firewood. All of his supplies and food were back at their campsite.

This area of the Oregon Mountains can be very confusing to hike and hunt. The ravines and valleys can be very steep and rocky. The region is known for mountain lions, bears, coyotes, deer, and elk. The sheri made a statement that if Jeromy had holed up under a log for a few days, he maybe lived an extra few days. He wasn't wearing a waterproof coat, and hypothermia could've set in quickly.

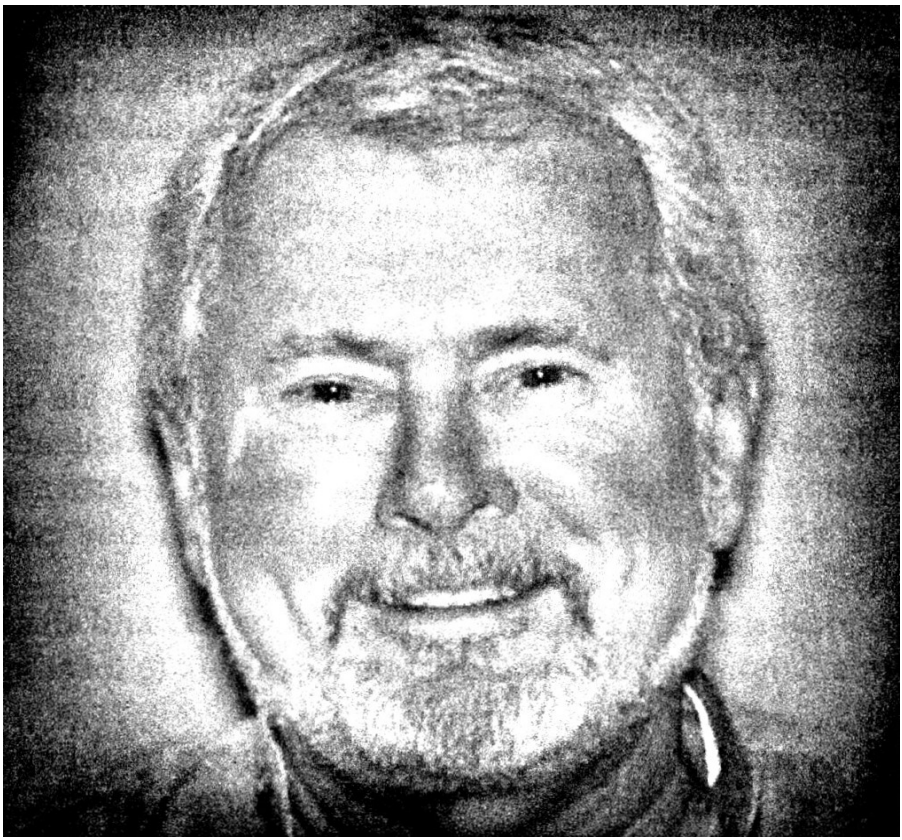
In this part of the mountains, sunlight doesn't last long. This coastal zone is known for foggy, wet, drizzly weather almost year-round.

Jeromy left a wife, son, and daughter. I am sure that the nightmares of the disappearances extend much farther than you might imagine. Shane Jr. and Shane Sr. have to live with the fact they were the last people to ever see Jeromy.

Tn 2006, Kristen petitioned the Oregon courts and was granted a death certificate for Jeromy. All legal records now state that Jeromy is

dead.

I hope that Kristen, Jesse, and Kelsey get the closure they desire and find the answers about what happened to their loved one.



Steve Litsey

Missing: 10/29/2011, Umpqua National Forest, fifty-six miles east of Roseburg, OR

Age at disappearance: 71 years

Point of Separation* Canines* Weather* Cluster Zone

Steve Litsey was a successful real-estate agent for Coldwell Banker Realtors in Paradise, California. Steve and his wife, Suzanne Snyder, lived in a suburb of Paradise but also owned a residence in Elkton, Oregon, located between Roseburg and Eugene.

In late October 2011, Steve went with a friend to the Twin Lakes area of the Umpqua National Forest for a week of hunting. The week didn't go well, and the men decided to make their last day October 29. The guys rose early, grabbed their rifles, and Steve snagged a daypack containing water and energy bars. The men started down toward the trailhead. Both men agreed to hunt on their own and meet back at their vehicle later in the day. Steve was last seen one-eighth of a mile down the trail in a small culvert; he was never seen again.

The Douglas County sheri was notified on October 29 that Steve was missing. The sheri called the US Forest Service, National Guard, and a variety of search-and-rescue teams. On October 31, eight di erent bloodhounds were brought into the area to attempt to track Steve; none could find his scent. Helicopters and all-terrain vehicles crisscrossed the trails and roads; nothing could be found that could be confirmed as belonging to the hunter. Just days after the search started, snow hit the area and made the search e ort extremely di icult. The snow covered any possible tracks and brought the aerial search to a complete halt.

After a massive one-week search e ort, the attempt to locate Steve Litsey was abandoned.

Summary

Steve was an experienced hunter that went into his day prepared. He had supplies, was dressed correctly, told someone where he was going, and knew the area well. Steve had a firearm and knew that if he was in danger to fire o three rounds. Nobody ever heard any calls for help.

The local sheri , forest service, and National Guard all supplied the normal amount of resources that they dedicate to locating missing people.

The location where Steve disappeared has a troubling past. I have written about this area extensively in Missing 411: Western United States. This north-south corridor through the Cascades has a history of people disappearing and sometimes killing them. Crater Lake National Park is just sixteen miles southeast from the Twin Lakes—the park and its surrounding area have a long history of people vanishing, with the majority never being found (See Missing 411 books). This area of the Oregon Cascades is not as steep, as high, or as rugged as mountains in Colorado, Idaho, or Montana, yet there appears to be more missing people who are never found here than makes logical sense.

Pennsylvania

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Newton Graham 12/02/1890* Unk*M

Harold Dolf 11/28/44* 38*M

George Franks 12/04/50-1:00 p.m.* 20*M

Emerson Carbaugh 01/11/85* 64*M

Newton Graham

Missing: 12/02/1890, Clearfield, PA

Age at disappearance: Unknown

Point of Separation* Weather*

During my years of researching missing people, Pennsylvania is the only state where I classified the entire state as a geographical cluster. It has the most children missing compared to any other state. Its disappearances are ba ling, and many are absolutely unexplainable.

In many cases, I explain how people disappear suddenly and without any response when they are called. Pay close attention to this case and how the details match what I have explained.

On December 2, 1890, Newton Graham went hunting with two friends in the Allegheny Mountains on the outskirts of Clearfield. A December 11, 1890, article in the Pittsburgh Daily Post contained a statement about the events: “The same day, in the thickest of the wilds, the two friends missed Graham. They immediately began to call but received no answer. Alarmed at this silence on the part of their companion, who had apparently only strayed o a short dis-tance, they began firing their guns, but in vain. In this manner they kept up their calling and firing for several hours, but received no response.”

Newton’s partners did the right thing by firing their rifles. The deer hunters knew something was very wrong when their partner failed to respond. Rifle shots can be heard for miles. Why wasn’t Newton responding? One of the most important parts to this story is the fact that Newton couldn’t have traveled far and wasn’t responding. This isn’t normal. The forest was described as extremely thick.

After darkness set into the hunting area, the two friends left to get

assistance.

On December 3, one hundred fifty friends, family, and local searchers combed the woods looking for the hunter. Newton's brother was a wealthy lumberman and committed significant resources to finding his brother. Articles stated that it had started to snow lightly on December 2 and continued on December 3. The search continued for several days while the snow continued to fall. Eventually the search was terminated because of the deep snow. Searchers never found any indication of where Newton might have been.

On March 24, 1891, Newton's body was found by an anonymous individual on the outskirts of Clearfield on Leonard Ridge. This March 25, 1891, article in the Williamsport Sun Gazette gives the details of what was found:

The body was lying on its left side, facing up the mountain side, lying parallel with the range and about three miles from where he was last seen alive. His arms were folded over his chest and legs were drawn up. Graham's face was disfigured by animals or birds. The body was in a fair state of preservation. There was nothing disturbed about his clothing except the disappearance of his watch. His gun, watch chain, mittens, hat and rifle were found in di erent parts of the woods.

It never explained whether he was found wearing boots or shoes.

It is very odd that his watch was missing. It was theorized that someone might have stolen it. To find so many personal items scattered over a wide area is unusual. It was very cold when he vanished: the mittens should have been on his hands; his hat should have been on his head. He disappeared as it was snowing, and it continued to snow more heavily the following day. Anyone looking for cover wouldn't go to a ridgetop but stay in a valley and look for cover from snow and other inclement weather.

The local coroner stated that Newton died of exhaustion. You will never see anyone in the twenty-first century with a death declaration of exhaustion.

Harold Dolf

Missing: 11/28/44, Galeton, PA Age at disappearance: 38 years Weather* Point of Separation* Canines* Cluster Zone* German

In 1944, Harold Dolf was a 38-year-old outdoorsman living in the small Pennsylvania town of Kingsley. The hunter's hometown was just

south of the New York border. In late November Dolf traveled one hundred miles west to another small village, Galeton. It was in the second town that Dolf me with friends who were going bear hunting. The area in and around the Allegheny National Forest is a geographical cluster zone for Pennsylvania.

On November 28, 1944 at approximately 3:00 p.m., something happened to Harold Dolf that is explained in this December 2, 1944 edition of the Shamokin News- Dispatch, “Harold Dolf, 38 of Kingsley, PA, wandered away from a hunting party between Indian Run and Silver Run, in Potter County, near Germania. A searching party set out immediately, but was interrupted by the heavy snowfall on Thursday.” The Pennsylvania Fish and Game took charge of the search. There were several notations in articles that said Dolf was a married man with three children who was a mechanic in Kingsley.

While the search was taking place, the snow kept falling until there were almost twelve inches on the ground. A call was made for several Bloodhound teams that did respond to the area and attempted to track Dolf. The dogs did not find the mechanic.

The fish and game department did make a statement that they believed that Dolf possibly died from exposure. Authorities were able to muster 60 locals and hunters to spend almost a week scouring the woods and finding nothing.

There was an exciting rumor spreading through Northern Pennsylvania in mid-December 1944. There was a woman in Kingsley that left town near the time that Harold vanished. Some people believed that the two people were somehow connected and left the area together. This was never proven and was probably a baseless rumor that floats around in many missing cases.

There are eight men and two women missing in the cluster that Dolf vanished. I could never find another article about a subsequent search.

I could also not locate any additional details about how Harold disappeared from the presence of his friends. It is during the period of time that this incident happened and several years after that I documented the highest number of children that disappeared from any state was right here in Pennsylvania (See Missing 411- Eastern United States), no other state is close.

George Franks

Missing: 12/04/50, 1:00 p.m., Milford, PA

Age at disappearance: 20 years Disability/ Illness* Water* Point of Separation* Weather

Milford is located in the far northeastern section of Pennsylvania and sits on the Delaware River. It is just two miles from the three corners of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. This specific incident happened at a hunting camp east of Lords Valley.

In this and past books, I have made it clear that individuals with disabilities and illnesses seem to disappear at a high-

er rate than others. The disabilities run the gamut of congenital and

even temporary. The victim in this event, George Franks, had a hearing disability; due to this he had a particular way of talking that was described by others as easily identifiable.

George Franks was the son of a Philadelphia police o icer who lived at 404 West Upsall Street in Philadelphia. In early December 1950, Geoige left his residence and drove north to Milford. He then went west to the Scarlet Oak Hunting Camp near Lords Valley. The camp itself was near the Shohola Marsh Reservoir. This area is in close proximity to the Delaware River and countless small lakes and swamps.

George went to the camp with his dad and other relatives. On December 4, 1950, just after 1:00 p.m., he grabbed his rifle and told the group that he was going to head out to hunt but that he wouldn't go far. As darkness came, family members started to get nervous because George hadn't returned. They went out looking for him, yelling his name and firing multiple rounds into the air. They never got any response. When he hadn't returned by the next morning, one of the groups went to Milford and notified the Pennsylvania State Police.

Within a short time, there were state troopers at the camp. They called for additional assistance and were backed up by local game wardens, park rangers, and the Civil Air Patrol. By the second day of the search, the weather started to change for the worse. Freezing rain and snow started to hammer the camp region. Bloodhounds that had been called for were now canceled because of the bad weather. Even the Civil Air Patrol planes were grounded.

Initially George's dad and family were not too concerned. He was an

experienced hunter and woodsman, and they felt he knew how to survive. As the days started to pass by without any evidence he was even in the area, nerves started to be shaken.

As the weather partially cleared, a helicopter went into the sky along with the planes. It was an exhaustive multiday e ort that found absolutely nothing. The area was marshy and rugged according to local reporters. (I should explain that a reporter in Pennsylvania calling hills “rugged,” isn’t exactly like the mountains in Wyoming, Montana, or Colorado and their rugged nature.)

The final count included over two hundred searchers who volunteered from the local community. This included seasoned and old-time loggers and trappers that knew the area intimately. People were ba led that they weren’t finding anything. The primary search was eventually terminated after approximately two weeks. George’s family was devastated. The weather conditions and the depth of the snow made any immediate search e orts futile. On March 7, 1951, the Pocono Record had this headline: “Search for Missing Hunter to Be Undertaken on Large Scale.” Colonel Philip Neuweiler of the civil air patrol was organizing a comprehensive air search. The search from the air was being organized in conjunction with the local police ground e ort. An April 9,1951, headline in the Pocono Record had this headline: “Gigantic Search Fails to Uncover Trace of Hunter.” The headline said it all; nothing was found. Finding nothing is not normal in searches. You usually find a shred of clothing, firearm, tracks, something. After weeks of searching, nothing was found.

George Franks was still making headlines in 1952. There were reports of a possible sighting of George in Germantown, Pennsylvania. These types of reports are common once a photo is distributed of the victim. It sometimes compromises law enforcement because they are obligated to follow up every lead even though 99 percent of them turn out to be nothing of value.

George Franks was last described as having a slight hearing impediment and slight speech issue. It was stated that he was five feet, nine and a half inches. He had a scar on the right side of his chest that was two inches long. He had light brown hair.

Pennsylvania is one of the most unusual states in the nation when you are dealing with missing people. Emerson Carbaugh (see the entry below) and George Franks were never found. Two hunters in one state that are never found may not seem unusual. I have said in many books that if the two people went missing in a close time frame of each

other, it would raise awareness. When two are separated by three decades, it never makes the news. If I hadn't written about it here, nobody would even know about the two disappearances.

The important factors in the Franks disappearance are the disabilities, weather change, proximity to water, point of separation and the lack of clues surrounding the disappearance. The family had to live a lifetime without answers.

Emerson Carbaugh

Missing: 11/11/85, Robertsdale, PA

Age at disappearance: 64 years

Point of Separation* Weather*

Emerson and his longtime hunting partner, Ralph Isett (brother- in-law), went turkey hunting. On November 11, 1985, the two men drove State Route 913 approximately two miles south of Roberts-dale. They started their day late, at around 3:00 p.m., and immediately split up. Emerson was carrying a Remington 870 shotgun. The men had agreed on a meeting location and time; Emerson never arrived. Isett did happen to meet an o -duty firefighter that was also hunting, and they both searched for Emerson. As they were searching, a cold rain started to fall, and that rain lasted through the night; they never found Mr. Carbaugh.

Emerson was hunting on New Grenada Mountain, also known as Robertsdale Mountain, adjacent to the designated state lands area just o the highway. There is a long ridgeline rising five hundred feet that runs the entire length of the state game area. The ridge has a road that runs its entire length, north to south, and both sides are dotted with dozens of farms.

State police participated in a massive search for Emerson without finding him or his property. It does not make sense that Emerson became lost. He knew that he could walk on either side of the ridge and find a farm. If he walked west, he would have hit a road. Something happened to Emerson that took him from this area. Emerson's family made the following statement: "I think he was taken out of the woods. I don't think he is alive." Ida Carbaugh was at the search site for an entire week as locals, firefighters, and law enforcement participated in the search.

Ida waited the required seven years and then had Emerson declared legally dead by a local court. The Pennsylvania State Police still have a missing persons file on Emerson.

Texas

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Luther Blanton 11/18/36* 57* M

John Blanton 11/18/36* 24* M

Water* Point of Separation*

In my years of documenting missing people, you would think there would be many cases from Texas. When I initially started accumulating cases, I did have a huge stack. Once I went through the stack and vetted the incidents, it turned out I only had a few. This case of missing duck hunters is fascinating and occurred on a very famous ranch.

The centerpiece of this story is the Kings Ranch, which is on the Gulf of Mexico northeast of Brownsville. Wikipedia did a brilliant job of defining the massive organization and property:

The Kings Ranch located in South Texas between Corpus Christi and Brownsville near Kingsville, is one of the largest ranches in the world. The King Ranch comprises 825,000 acres (3,340 km^2; 1,289 sq mi) and was founded in 1853 by Captain Richard King and Gideon K. Lewis, includes portions of six Texas counties, including most of Kleberg County and much of Kenedy County, with portions extending into Brooks, Jim Wells, Nueces, and Willacy Counties. The ranch does not consist of one single contiguous plot of land, but rather four large sections called divisions. The divisions are the Santa Gertrudis, the Laureles, the Encino and the Norias. Only the first two of the four divisions border each other, and that border is relatively short. The ranch was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1961.

Today's King Ranch has diversified into a major agribusiness with interests in cattle ranching and feedlot operations, farming (citrus, cotton, grain, sugar cane, and turfgrass), commodity marketing and processing, luxury retail goods, and recreational hunting.

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Sepa ration*

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In November 1936, the Blanton family lived on the outskirts of San Perlita, Texas, just ten miles north of Brownsville. The family owned a tract of land that they farmed. Their property was adjacent to the Kings Ranch.

Late in the afternoon of November 18, 1936, Luther and his son John grabbed their shotguns and walked to their fence that separated the Blanton farm from the King Ranch. Family members state they crawled through the wires and headed for a small pond two hundred yards from their property to go duck hunting. Articles at the time described the ranch as being one million acres in size. John told his

mom that the pair would be back for dinner.

Shortly after the Blanton's left and the appropriate time it would have taken them to get to the pond, the family heard a series of gunshots. They didn't think much of the shots at the time because the pair were duck hunting. As darkness fell and the men didn't return, the Blanton family called the sheri and reported them as missing.

Articles at the time insinuated some resistance on the part of the ranch to allow anyone access to their property. The San Perlita community got irate and demanded access for the deputies to investigate, who were finally given that right to search. A Brownsville Herald article of June 22, 1938, explained the investigative procedure of the Texas rangers: "Rangers entered the case in the first few days of the investigation with Colonel H. H. Carmichael then head of the state unit, assigning Ranger Captain William McMurray to the investigation. The probers questioned several hundred persons and covered many miles on the million-acre King Ranch domain."

As the community was coming together about the Blanton's disappearance, some in that community remembered another highly suspicious disappearance in February 1936. This Denton Record article of December 3, 1936, explains, "Rivera and Reyes Ramirez vanished last February 18 while hunting about two miles from the place where the Blanton's were last seen. Suarez [the Mexican consul in Brownsville] said he had received no answer to a letter he wrote over a week ago requesting rangers to combine an investigation of the Rivera case with the search for the Blanton's."

As the weeks after the disappearance passed, the county where the Blanton's lived posted a two-thousand-dollar reward for the bodies of the Blanton's'. This was a huge amount of money for the time.

Six months after the incident, papers stated that there were no leads or suspects in the case. Articles stated that the case was largely believed to be dormant.

In 1936 the Kings Ranch held much influence in Texas due to its wealth and the mere size of the property, which covered multiple counties. The Texas rangers did go onto the property and did. talk to employees. They never knew who was standing guard in that area of their land at the time of the Blanton case, or if anyone was in that area at that time. It was known throughout Texas that the ranch had a large contingent of guards that patrolled the property for trespassers. They didn't want anyone on the property, period.

A February 26, 1968, article in the Victoria Advocate called the disappearance of the Blanton's "one of the most mysterious unsolved cases on Texas Ranger records." One of the theories that was proposed in this article was that father and son were killed by employees of the ranch for trespassing. One of the Texas rangers discounted the theory and believed that after the amount of investigation done on the case, something would've turned up. His theory was that the men voluntarily left the area and moved somewhere else. They supposedly found a witness in the community saying that Luther had talked of taking his son with him to Canada. He supposedly had a large amount of cash with him at the time he vanished. This was never proven. The Texas rangers sent investigators to British Columbia and met with Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Neither organization ever found any evidence the men were in Canada, had gone to Canada, or even left the pond they were hunting.

After you've been in law enforcement for many years, you realize that as time passes in an investigation, people talk. Suspects die, relatives feel the guilt of the knowledge they possess, and many times they will go to authorities and explain how someone was killed decades earlier. Sometimes it's not a relative; sometimes it's a girlfriend from decades past. It's truly bizarre that four men vanished in less than a year and two miles apart, and none were ever found, and no arrests were ever made. The mere fact that the Texas rangers call this one of their biggest mysteries tells me they really have no idea what happened to the four hunters.

I'd make one large bet about these incidents: nobody in the San Perlita area ever jumped the Kings Ranch fence after this was publicized.

Utah

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Marlon (or Marion) Robb

Rudolph Bertagnole

John Young 06/05/26* 17*M

Donald Pack 10/18/43,5:00 p.m.*48*M 10/26/51* 24*M 10/26/55* Clinton Jason Daines 19*M 10/16/2009* 35*M

Marlon Robb (sometimes given as Marion)

Missing: 06/05/26, twenty miles north of Paragonah, UT

Age at disappearance: 17 years

Canines» Point of Separation

This incident is centered on a region in the far southwestern portion of Utah. Paragonah is a very small city, twenty miles from Bryce and Zion National Parks and forty miles north of the Arizona border. The incident occurred in a region twenty miles south of Paragonah near Cottonwood Canyon. This location is approximately four miles from Kane Point.

This isn't the only story about sheepherders that I have ever encountered. Missing 411: Eastern United States has an entire chapter dedicated to sheepherders that have vanished under unusual circumstances.

The Robb family were sheepherders, and the two brothers had the responsibility to take care of the herd. Articles spelled the name of the victim in this story two di erent ways: Marlon and Marion. For consistency, in this story I will call him Marlon. Something had been stealing sheep belonging to the Robbs, and the boys had decided to ride out, separate, and look for the culprit. Marlon had told his brother he had seen a coyote and was going to ride out and kill it. This was the last time Marlon was seen.

A June 8, 1926, article in the Billings Gazette had the following headline: "Hounds to Seek Youth Likely Taken by Beast." When Marlon didn't return, Marlon's brother rode out to find his brother and found his horse. There was blood on the saddle, and his brother's hat was sitting on the saddle horn. The brother searched farther and found a location where he believed his brother had sat down— there was more blood and his brother's rifle. He searched into the night and couldn't find Marlon. He rode back to the community and asked for assistance.

The family had some type of political connections, because articles state that Utah governor George Dern sent special bloodhounds to the area to assist in the e ort to find Marlon. Teams went back to the area where Marlon's brother had found blood and the rifle, and in a region farther away from that scene, searchers found Marlon's knife and parts of his clothing saturated in blood. There were two sites where it appeared that Marlon had sat and rested. The rifle that was found was still loaded.

A June 8, 1926, article in the Salt Lake Tribune explained what

happened when the bloodhounds came onto the scene: “Bloodhounds were put on the scent but the animals appeared to be bewildered and could not follow the scent. Hundreds of men have joined in the hunt and covered every foot of the ground in Cottonwood Canyon for a radius of twenty five miles with no trace of the missing boy other than his knife and gun and the clots of blood where they were found.”

The search for Marlon went on for weeks with upward of one thousand men from throughout the state participating in the e ort to find the sheepherder. After almost three weeks of intensive searching with bloodhounds from all di erent parts of the state and many woodsmen and other sheepherders, Marlon was not found, and the search was terminated.

In late October 1933, a deer hunter, Archie Lamareaux, was in an area six miles from the 1926 Robb sheepherding camp when he made an unusual find. Archie found bits of clothing, bits of shoes, and a partial skeleton. The remains were turned over to the sheri , who identified the remains as Marlon’s. There was no information on the terrain where the body was found or the condition of the remains, and there was never a statement on the cause of death.

Summary

This entire event is mired in confusing information. Some articles state that Marlon vanished twenty miles northwest of Paragonah, and some say southwest. Cottonwood Canyon is southwest. Some articles state it was Marion who was lost, some say Marlon.

I find it very, very unusual that the newspaper articles mentioned the strange behavior of the bloodhounds refusing to track. Again, unusual behavior by canines plays a major role in a disappearance.

I know that some of you may feel that a cougar or bear took down Marlon. I don’t think so. The boy was able to get to two different locations and rest, and his rifle was still loaded. Why would a predator take on a formidable target like a human on a horse when there were hundreds of helpless sheep to victimize? I find it very unusual that search teams knew the exact location where Marlon had rested and bled and still were unable to get dogs to track. Another confusing point in this story deals with Marlon’s last known location. Trackers are experts at finding people who have left tracks, especially in the woods. The June 8, 1926, article in the Salt Lake Tribune had a sectional title “Tracks Missing” with the following statement: “Men who are familiar with tracking animals and men have been active but

have failed to find a trace of track leaving the spots where the missing boy had evidently sat down." There was some conjecture in news articles that sheep or other animals may have obliterated the tracks—very, very doubtful. A newspaper doesn't place a statement in an article like that unless it bothered the trackers on the scene.

Marlon wasn't the only victim of this incident. One year after he disappeared, his father died of extreme heartbreak from missing his boy.

This entire event bothered me immensely. Tracks don't disappear, and bloodhounds don't arbitrarily decide not to track. The June 8, 1926, article in the Billings Gazette article talked about using hounds to seek a "beast." I think if we knew what the beast was, we'd understand what happened to Marlon.

Rudolph Bertagnole

Missing: 10/18/43, 5:00 p.m., Croydon, UT

Age at disappearance: 48 years —■—— Point of Separation* Illness/ Disability* Weather

I spent several hours trying to determine exactly where this incident occurred. My hard work paid o . From Ogden, Utah, you take Highway 84 east until you get to an intersection that has two names.

The first name that quickly stuck out was Devil's Slide. I wrote Missing 411: The Devil is in the Detail about locations that have the word Devil in the name, where people seem to vanish more than normal. Just east of this intersection is Croydon, Utah. You turn northeast on Lost Creek Road, also known as N5800E. This is where the entire event got me turned upside down. Every document I reviewed on this event spelled the name of the valley it happened in as Gildersleeve Canyon. Well, there is no such place. The correct spelling is Gildersleeve Canyon, and you access it by turning north on Gildersleeve Road. This road dead-ends in approximately three to four miles at a location called

Devils Hollow. This is where the event happened.

In October 1943 Rudolph Bertagnole was living in the Salt Lake Valley of Utah and was an auto parts distributor. He had a very good business and was supported in life by his wife, Mary Drucilla Bertagnole.

On October 18 Rudolph drove his car from Salt Lake and proceeded up Gildersleeve Canyon to the end of the dirt road, where he met his three friends to hunt deer. Ellery Tremaine was a me-chanic from Ogden; W. C. Tremaine, Ellery's father, and his brother Roy Tremaine were from California. The group left their cars at the camp they established and headed up the canyon. This October 25, 1943, article in the Salt Lake Tribune explains what happened: "Mr. Bertagnole was last seen about 5:00 p.m. when he was reported to have told hunters he didn't feel well and planned to return home."

In several past books, I have documented and noted that when people state they don't feel well, this is oftentimes followed by them disappearing, many times never to be found. It almost seems that this would be a method to separate someone from a group and make them vulnerable.

The hunters that Rudolph was with eventually made it to their camp later that night and saw that Rudolph's car was still there, and he wasn't. They realized that something was wrong and decided to see if he came back into camp. Rudolph didn't make it back that night and the hunters he was with went out the following day and searched. The other hunters did say that at about the time Rudolph stated he didn't feel well and was going back to camp, it started to rain, and it continued to rain for the following three days. The rain got heavier and heavier with each day. At the end of the first day they searched, they drove in to report him as missing.

Morgan County sheri Bernard Dahlquist took charge of the search e ort. He quickly got the assistance of the US Forest Service, civil air patrol, and a number of volunteers and relatives of the victim from the Salt Lake area. The sheri also made a call to Hill Field for soldiers to assist in the search. Dozens of soldiers did volunteer to search for the hunter. The sheri said that searchers had to organize quickly because there was another incoming storm. The sheri was also fortunate to have several Bloodhound teams come into the canyon early in the e ort and assist. They never found a scent.

Searchers were puzzled because Rudolph was a very experienced hunter and woodsman. He was in excellent health and relished his time in the outdoors. After dozens of hours of Civil Air Patrol time, hundreds of man-hours, and dog time and equestrians covering the hillside, nothing was ever found indicating where Rudolph was or what happened to him.

The search was finally terminated after ten days and without finding a single clue. The county sheri did post a reward of $1,250 for Rudolph's body. That reward went up and down for the following two years.

The searching may have been terminated for 1943, but Rudolph had many friends, and they returned in May and August 1944 with organized search e orts. They again found nothing. There was another search attempt in the summer of 1945 that had the same result.

On August 12,1946, Rudolph's wife, Mary Drucilla Bertagnole, filed a petition with the Utah courts asking them to acknowledge he was dead, allow his will to be read, and force life insurance companies to pay their policies. She was granted her request on all levels.

Rudolph's suspicious disappearance still was on the minds of Utah residents almost ten years later. A February 8, 1953, article in the

Ogden Standard had this information: “The missing hunter, Mr. Bertagnole has been legally declared dead, but this has not stilled the speculation as to how he met his death. Nor has it solved the mystery of how his body could remain hidden from scores of searchers who knew exactly where he disappeared.” Even in 1953 someone was paying attention to the facts and questions associated with these missing people.

If you view the area on Google Maps, you will see that there are many open meadows without a lot of big timber or rocky crags. To disappear in this area seems di icult. Rudolph’s car was parked in an area that would’ve made walking out of the region a near impossibility. He was around hunters when he stated that he didn’t feel well. The hunters knew the most direct path back to camp and saw Rudolph taking it. These facts gave SAR a specific area to search. It also gave Bloodhounds the specific area to pick up a scent. The Civil Air Patrol knew the exact area where to fly and look from the air. How can all of these rescue tools fail?

Rudolph was never found.

John “Red” Young

Missing: 10/26/51, eighty miles south of Vernal, UT

Age at disappearance: 23 or 24 years

Point of Separation* Weather*

Uintah County, Utah, and the mountains that carry the same name have been associated with strangeness over the decades. I have personally written about several highly unusual disappearances from this region in the far northeast area of the state.

John “Red” Young was raised in New Kensington, Pennsylvania. When he was just out of high school, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and spent two years on assignment in Germany. He came back to the Keystone State, enlisted in Pitt, and finished his degree in geology in just three and a half years. Red was a brilliant young man that had worldly experience. He was immediately hired by Gulf Oil and assigned as a sta geologist in their Vernal, Utah, o ice.

On Friday, October 26, 1951, Red had taken the day o work under the orders of his boss, R. B. Carter. The pair drove eighty miles south of Vernal to the Brook Cli Mountains to go deer hunt-ing. In the late afternoon, Red told his boss to hold his position, and he’d walk a half-mile circle to drive the deer toward him. He laid his rifle next to his boss and took o . Hours later, Red had not returned, and the decision was made to contact the Uintah County sheri .

Uintah County sheri Herbert Snyder eventually arrived at the camp and took charge of the SAR. Snow was falling o and on early in this e ort, and at one point the sheri made statements to the media that they had two inches of new snow on the ground that obliterated any opportunity to track Red.

Two days into the SAR, Red’s father was flying out from Pennsylvania when his plane was reported lost in a heavy snowstorm. Later that day the plane reappeared, and he made it to the scene. On November 4, Carbon County sheri Joe Holman brought his bloodhound to the scene and attempted to track Red’s scent. He did not have success. At another time in the search, Indian trackers were brought to the point where Red was last seen and stated that one half mile away they thought they observed a compass drawn in the ground that they believed Red had drawn. They thought that he might have been heading for Desolation Valley.

Also on November 4, Sheri Snyder made a public broadcast on KJAM radio asking for one hundred fifty volunteer searchers to come to the scene and assist. The sheri was able to muster seventy-five searchers, and they did comb a wide area under his guidance.

A November 6 article in the Salt Lake Tribune had this information about the search: “All of the 74 men participated in the search Monday were called back to Vernal by Sheri Herbert Snyder after search e orts had been hampered by freezing temperatures and snowstorms.” The search was formally called o at this point.

In the days after Red’s disappearance, his father made a public statement that he thought his son must’ve had amnesia. I seriously doubt that anyone has heard of anything similar to Red’s father’s statement in the last forty years. His dad was grasping for answers about where his son may have gone and why his body hadn’t been found. He knew his son was brilliant, had a significant amount of common sense, and the facts surrounding the disappearance weren’t making sense. How could airplanes, bloodhounds, trackers and ground searchers not find any trace of the young hunter? I will agree that if you haven’t read my books, this may seem completely foreign. The reality is that this happens far more frequently than the public understands.

One item I have written about in past books is the disappearance of victims at each end of the intellectual and disability spectrum. At one end there are young men with brilliant minds in excellent health that somehow vanish under extraordinary conditions. On the other end, you have people with serious disabilities—from dementia, autism, and other medical conditions— that have also vanished and are sometimes found phenomenal distances and heights from the point last seen. I don’t make any theory about what is happening; I merely am pointing to facts. I do believe that Red represents one end of that intellectual spectrum that vanished under unusual circumstances. I do think it’s a bit ironic that Red left to hike the half circle and did so without his rifle.

I never found anything indicating there were follow-up searches in the area for the geologist.

Donald Pack

Missing: 10/26/55, Dog Lake Trailhead, UT

Age at disappearance: 19 years

Weather» Point of Separation

I've written about several strange disappearances in the mountains east of Salt Lake City. This incident happened directly east of West Jordan, Utah. You would take Highway 190 east to the Dog Lake trailhead. This was the location where this event started.

On October 26, 1955, Donald Pack left his parents' residence at 3:00 p.m. and headed out for deer hunting near Dog Lake. He arrived at the trailhead, and the weather started to change rapidly. He carried his rifle and saw others as he walked into the wilderness. At 10:00 p.m., Donald had not returned home, and his parents called the sheri . Rookie Salt Lake County Deputy Sheri Robert Jack responded to the parents' residence and took the report. He left that night, went to the trailhead, and located Donald's vehicle. The deputy was given command of the search, and he immediately started to call for additional resources.

Throughout that first night and into the next morning, snow was falling hard at the trailhead. Deputy Jack had horses brought in, and searchers took the trail on horseback. Jack described the snow as getting deeper with each passing day. Searchers did not find any witnesses, tracks, or other evidence. After five days of searching, the e ort was terminated.

As the years went by, Donald's mom continued to think about what happened to her son. She stated that she always felt there would be closure and never gave up that hope.

On October 23, 1982, two hunters were at the ten-thousand- foot elevation of a ridge separating Cottonwood Canyon and Mill Creek Canyon and found a rifle with a round in the chamber and the safety on. They continued to look and found a wallet and skeletal remains. The Salt Lake County Sheri was called. Sheri 's captain of detectives Robert Jack oversaw this incident— yes, the same Robert Jack who took the original missing person report. Captain Jack stated that the wallet contained Donald's social security card and other identifying information. Donald had been found.

Captain Jack stated that he looked for Ronald for two years after that

initial search. He stated that the odd early snowfall that apparently killed Donald obliterated any possible tracks. Donald's parents were pleased that after almost twenty-seven years to the day, closure had finally happened, and they were able to bury their son.

There are several factors surrounding this death that are unusual. During a snow blizzard, the higher you go in elevation, the colder it gets and the more you are open to the elements. Donald was found at the top of a ridge between two canyons, an unusual place to hide from inclement weather. The fact that his rifle was found with a bullet in the chamber and the safety on indicates that he didn't die from a firearm accident. The Utah State medical examiners made a guess that Donald died of hypothermia; that couldn't be proven.

Many of the people I have written about in past books faced unusual weather that either trapped them or hampered the search, this was the case in Donald's search. Unusually heavy snow early in the season obliterated tracks and restricted aircraft over the area. All of these factors must've played an integral role in Donald not being found at the time. It is a very unusual incident that skeletal remains can be found and later identified after twenty-seven years. I find it highly unusual that paper in a wallet can be identifiable after almost three decades of Utah's harsh climate.

Clinton Jason Daines

Missing: 10/16/2009, Big Mountain Monument, Salt Lake City, Utah

Age at disappearance: 35 years

Clinton Daines was an avid outdoorsman who apparently decided to go deer hunting on opening day 2009. He didn't arrive at work on October 17 and friends knew he went hunting and started a search. His 2003 Ford Ranger pickup was found by searchers in the Big Monument parking lot in East Canyon. Inside the truck law enforcement found an empty box of 9-mm hollow-point shells; they later found he had just purchased a new Glock pistol.

Big Mountain Monument is a majestic sixty-feet-tall statue commemorating the Mormon Trail east of Salt Lake City. The parking lot is at the head of Emigration Canyon, which leads into the mountains at the foot of Pioneer Trail State Park.

A search of the area was performed without finding Clinton. There are few leads in this case.

Vermont

Name Date Missing» Age» Sex

Alfred J. Bishop 11/03/26» Unknown» M

Carl Herrick 11/23/43» 37»M

Middie Rivers 11/12/45» 75»M

Freida Langer 10/28/50» 53»F

Carl D. Ross 11/17/57» 27»M

Alfred J. Bishop

Missing: 11/03/26, Reading, Vermont

Age at disappearance: Unknown

Point of Separation* Unknown Cause of Death* Cluster Zone

Alfred Bishop and his friend Morris Gallagher left their residence in Felchville and traveled a short distance to their hunting area in a region near Reading, Vermont. The men arrived early in the day and decided to split up and meet back at their cars at an agreed-upon time. Alfred never came back. Once Morris realized his friend wasn't going to arrive, he searched the immediate area of their cars and then headed to Springfield to get additional assistance.

Approximately twenty-four hours after Alfred disappeared, searchers found his body, under very, very strange circumstances. On November 4 the Lewiston Daily ran the following description of the scene: "Bishop's body was found beside an abandoned road in the woods near the summer camp of Attorney General John G. Sargent. There were evidences of a terrific struggle in the snow, which was beaten down for a distance of 60 paces about the body. Strewn about in di erent directions were Bishop's rifle, coat and gloves." The article also stated, "The state's attorney said he was puzzled by the lack of blood stains in the snow. A preliminary examination disclosed no wounds on Bishop's body."

Alfred's body was sent for autopsy. The Bridgeport Telegram had an article on November 6 that described the autopsy result: "An autopsy was performed today on the body of Alfred Bishop of Felchville and failed to dispel the mystery of the young man's death during a hunting

trip Wednesday. No external marks of violence were disclosed on the autopsy." The same article described the area where Alfred was found: "The snow had been trampled over a considerable area and there was every evidence of a terrific struggle."

Thirty-five miles southeast from Reading is West Townshend, a location where an equally ba ling death occurred with some parallel elements, the case of Carl Herrick.

Carl Herrick

Missing: 11/23/43, West Townshend, VT

Age at disappearance: 37 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Weather*

West Townshend is approximately ten miles northeast from Bennington. It's a rural area with thick woods surrounding the community. The town is on the east side of Glastenbury Mountain, the location where others have disappeared that I have chronicled in Missing 411- Eastern United States.

On November 23, 1943, Carl Herrick and his cousin Henry Herrick went to West Townshend to go deer hunting. At some point during the hunt, the Herricks got separated, and Carl never arrived at camp. Henry notified law enforcement almost immediately. In an unfortunate turn for searchers, snow started to fall the first night that Carl was missing.

The search for Carl continued for three days without finding any trace of the man. Late on that third day, Carl's cousin, Henry, found Carl on the mountain lying on the ground, motionless. Henry walked to the body and found Carl's face black, with minor scratches on the arms and hands. There were some alleged bear tracks on the ground in the area. Carl's rifle was found leaning against a tree seventy feet away. There was one expended round lying on the ground near the rifle.

A November 27, 1943, article in the Dunkirk Evening Observer had the following: "Acting coroner Carlos Otis said the bear had cu ed [scratched] Herrick about the head but killed him by squeezing. The victim's lung was punctured."

Summary

After conducting thousands of hours of research and reading countless

documents about a person's cause of death, I have never read about a bear that squeezed an adult to death. Many of the artides surmised that Carl shot a bear, placed his rifle against a tree, and walked up to the body to find the bear still alive. All hunters are trained to keep your weapon with you, walk to the body, and touch the eye with the barrel to ensure the animal doesn't flinch. It's hard for me to believe that Carl placed his rifle against the tree and walked seventy feet to a downed bear.

Henry had told searchers that the pair was hunting deer, not bear. Even if Carl was charged by a bear, the likelihood of him shooting only once and immediately dropping the animal would be minimal; you'd fire multiple times to ensure a wounded bear wasn't running around in the wild. If a bear charged Carl, I seriously doubt he'd lean his rifle against a tree just before his demise.

It's also extremely hard to believe that a bear would grab a person and try to squeeze them to death, especially bears of the United States, which are not that large. If a bear grabbed a person, it would bite and claw you. There was not one mention on any report of a severe cut or wound to Carl, only minor scratches and no bite marks. The coroner stated that Carl had a broken rib that punctured his lung. The force it takes to break a rib and puncture a lung is exceptional, and I don't believe that a black bear in North America could accomplish this on a grown adult male without inflicting severe parallel injuries that would make it clear it was a bear.

Carl left behind five small children.

What I find ironic about the deaths of Alfred Bishop and Carl Herrick is that these are the only two hunting related deaths in the region that have very bizarre circumstances.

Middie Rivers

Missing: 11/12/45, Glastenbury Mountain, Bennington, VT

Age at disappearance: 75 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation

Middie Rivers lived almost his entire life in the Bennington area. He truly enjoyed the outdoor lifestyle and devoted every free minute of his time to hunting and fishing. Middie was lucky to blend a hobby into his job; he became a game guide.

On November 12, 1945, Middie was taking four hunters onto Glastenbury Mountain. They spent the day on the mountain and were on their way back down. Middie had made this trip hundreds of times; he knew this mountain like you know your backyard. As the group was coming down, the guide got slightly ahead and somehow never arrived at their vehicles.

A search was conducted, and the path that the group took was retraced. The only item that searchers found was one bullet next to a creek along the path that Middie was traveling. The newspapers printed the following about the discovery of the bullet: “Middie leaned down to get a drink and it fell out of his pocket.”

Searchers never found Middie, never found his supplies, rifle, coat, hat, nothing.

Summary

Middie was the one individual in the Bennington area that would never get lost. The idea that searchers couldn’t locate his body means that he was taken from the area; there is no other explanation.

Finding the bullet next to the creek could have one other explanation. Middie may have been walking near the creek, saw what appeared to be a threat, removed a bullet from his coat, and was trying to load his firearm and was over powered.

In Missing 411- Eastern United States I wrote about the disappearance of a college girl that disappeared thirteen months after the Rivers case on the same mountain. The disappearance of a pretty college girl got national attention, the Rivers case got almost none. Neither case has ever been resolved.

Freida Langer

Missing: 10/28/50, Somerset, VT

Age at disappearance: 53 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation» Water

Max and Freida Langer left their residence in North Adams and proceeded to their hunting cabin in Somerset, Vermont, just four miles east of Bennington. They brought their cousin Herbert Elsner with them to hunt. The group arrived at the cabin in the woods and unpacked their supplies. They were in an area that was known quite

well to the Langers; they had owned and vacationed at this cabin for fourteen years.

On October 28, 1950, Max woke up with a very sore knee and told Freida and Herbert to go out and hunt, and he'd stay behind at the camp. Freida and Herbert got out of camp late and were walking for almost an hour when Freida tripped and fell into a small creek. She told Herbert that she wanted to walk back to camp to change clothes. The two walked in the direction of camp for several minutes and then decided to momentarily split up but later meet back in camp; it was now just before 4:00 p.m. An article in the Lowell Sun dated October 31, 1950, stated: "When last seen she (Freida Langer) was drenched from a fall in a brook and was within 150 yards of the woodland cabin she and her husband had owned for 14 years."

At quarter to five, Herbert arrived back at camp, and Freida had still not arrived. It was at this point that Max and Herbert decided to go out and search for his wife. The men were concerned because the hunter knew the area very well; there was no way in their mind that she could've been lost, not this close to the cabin.

The men did not find Freida the first night and obtained assistance from wardens and law enforcement. A week-long search for Freida could not find the lady, and e orts were eventually suspended.

Nothing further was developed on this incident until May 14, 1951. James Renton and Herman Lincoln were fishing in a spot three miles from the hunting cabin where Freida and Max were staying. This area had been thoroughly searched when Freida had initially disappeared. The men saw something in high weeds at the end of a swampy area near a flood dam. The men walked into the reeds and swamp and saw a body, the body of Freida Langer. A coroner's report indicated that Freida died from accidental drowning.

Summary

In reading the articles associated with the Freida Langer case, I was shocked that there was not an inquest into her death. The woman was one hundred fifty yards away from a cabin that she had owned for fourteen years; there is no way she was lost. This woman knew exactly where she was going; something very unusual happened to her.

The key to this and many other cases highlighted in this book is the location of the body. Freida was found in a swampy area in high weeds. You cannot convince me that people seek out swamps to walk

into and die—it makes no sense!

Carl D. Ross

Missing: 11/17/57, Ripton, VT Age at disappearance: 27 years Cluster Zone» Point of Separation» Vermont is a small state with many unusual disappearances. There is a large cluster of missing people matching our profile that centers on Bennington in southern Vermont. I have written extensively about this area in Missing 411- Eastern United States.

On November 17, 1957, Carl Ross was hunting with friends in the forests near Ripton, Vermont, two miles east of Middlebury in the Green Mountain National Forest. Carl and his hunting companions decided to split up to hunt deer. Carl never met at the agreed-upon time and location. Once Carl didn't arrive, his hunting companions immediately notified local conservation o icers, and they headed the search.

The distance from where Carl was last in communication with his hunting party to where their camp was located was not a long distance. A November 22 article in the Bennington Banner had this: "Yesterday an Air Force helicopter scanned without success the relatively small area where the missing man dropped from sight." They were not searching many square miles. It was a very confined area.

The helicopter from Ethan Allen Air Force Base was on the scene for a week scanning the ground, while ground teams canvassed the area foot by foot. The exact area of the search had ponds that were dragged, and two hundred fifty searchers formed grids to cover all areas. The search was terminated after seven days with absolutely nothing found that indicated Carl was anywhere in the area. A November 27, 1957, article in the Evening Banner had this about the continuing e ort to locate Carl: "State Police say they will continue to investigate the strange disappearance of a Burlington man who dropped from sight Nov. 17 in dense woods near here." Even the state police considered the disappearance strange.

Tn March 1958 Mrs. Carl Ross asked for a federal criminal investigation of her husband's disappearance. It was unusual that she asked the feds for assistance. Did she think the state police in Vermont were compromised in some way? Maybe she felt that local police did not have the resources of federal law enforcement.

On November 17, 1958, Deputy Attorney General Fred Reed told the press that Deputy Attorney General Stephen Richardson had been investigating Carl's disappearance and had interviewed everyone in his hunting party. The attorneys stated that an inquest would probably be conducted at some later date. I never found another notation about the inquest or any finding of Carl's body.

Virginia

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Eric Smith 11/08/2013, 10:00 a.m.*41*M

Eric Smith

Missing: 11/08/2013, 10:00 a.m., Cedar Blu , VA Age at disappearance: 41 years Disability/ Illness* Canines*

The following case concerns someone with a disability who vanished just after he told others he didn't feel well. Eric Smith was a forty-one-year-old father of two living on West Hurt Buggy Road on the out

skirts of Cedar Blu , Virginia. He was a general mine foreman for Consol Energy. Friends and coworkers knew him as a very safety-conscious person who was extremely fair. Eric and his family owned forty acres of rural land on West Hurt Buggy Road on the outskirts of Cedar Blu , where he often went hunting.

In the early-morning hours of November 8, 2013, Eric left his residence and told his wife he was going hunting behind his home on their land. When Eric didn't return later that day, she called the police.

Cedar Blu police took the lead in the search for the hunter. The

Tazewell County sheri initially assisted them and later the Virginia State Police o ered more investigative assistance. The search for Eric started that first night. The initial search lasted six days. The Cedar Blu police chief stated that eight di erent bloodhound teams were brought to the property and tried to find a scent. Hundreds of volunteers from the local community and Consol Energy skipped work and looked for their friend. Helicopters flew the area looking for the hunter.

Eric's wife told the sheri that her husband lost his eye in an industrial accident several years ago. She also stated that he had complained of flu-like symptoms the morning he left. There have been numerous instances I have written about where someone complains of feeling ill or not feeling normal, and they leave the companionship of others only never to be seen again.

Searchers found nothing on Eric's property. After six days the search was terminated.

There were many rumors in the local community about possible foul play. There were also rumors that Eric voluntarily left the area and his family. There wasn't one fellow employee or friend that was interviewed that believed that Eric would ever voluntarily leave his family, he was described as extremely devoted.

The local police interviewed everyone associated with this case and concluded that the disappearance was out of character for Eric. His family posted an $8,000 reward for anyone locating the lost hunter.

It has now been years since the disappearance, and there has been no trace found of Eric. Just twenty miles from where Eric disappeared, a young girl that vanished under extremely unusual circumstances. I documented this in Missing 411: North America and Beyond. Starting at this location in the Appalachian Mountains and extending south, this area has included some of the strangest disappearances imaginable. Just south into Tennessee, there is a large geographical cluster of missing people in and around Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

Washington

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

11/09/31, noon • 21*M

11/01/46* 34*M

12/15/49* 17*M

10/14/51* 14*M

11/26/56* 74* M

11/13/65* 28*M

Julius Bakken Joe 11/18/65,3:00 p.m.*43*M

Blackburn Donald

McDonald Bobby 12/05/66* 35*M

Boatman Jim Eaton 10/18/67* 79*M

Wagner Robinson

Leonard Vacknitz Arthur 11/13/71* 16*M

Norburg John Stratton 10/19/73* 2*M James Annis Jimmy Du y Raymond Matlock 11/07/98* 28*M

Julius Bakken

Missing: 11/09/31, noon, Wenatchee, WA

Age at disappearance: 21 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Canines

This is one of many people who disappeared in the Wenatchee Lake area. Julius went to the location with four other friends to hunt near Fish Lake, just one mile north of Wenatchee Lake. On November 9, the group decided to split up and meet back at noon. Julius never made the meeting, and law enforcement was called.

Snow was falling on November 9 and continued to cover tracks in the area over the next several days. Searchers spent two days searching the Fish Lake area and then moved their e orts just north to an area called Meadow Creek. Bloodhounds were used in both locations, and no scent of Julius was ever found. The last place his companions saw Julius was on Pole Ridge, just one mile from Fish Lake.

Search e orts continued for ten days, and they never found anything confirming Julius was in the region. The last article I found was published on November 19, and it confirmed that the search was

being terminated. I could not find any other articles ever stating that his body was found.

The area around Wenatchee Lake is one of the strangest locations in North America for missing people. Three of my first four books on missing people have notes about this region. I would consider this region to be one of the major hot spots in North America for missing people over the last century. This incident happened in close proximity to the Jimmy Du y case documented later in this chapter.

Joe Blackburn

Missing: 11/01/46, Goose Prairie, WA

Age at disappearance: 34 years

Cluster Zone

This is a story that defies logic. It involves a person that knew the forest, its animals and associated wildlife, the dangers, and the topography. This disappearance is puzzling.

The location of this incident is Goose Prairie just east of Mount Rainier National Park. Mount Rainier has been classified as a cluster zone of missing people who fit the profile we've established.

Joe Blackburn was a forest guide that worked the area around his home in Goose Prairie, Washington. He was not only a guide; he was also known as a trapper and hunter who was one of the most knowledgeable men in this part of the state when dealing with the outdoors.

Joe was an outfitter for people who were hunters and wanted the outdoor experience. On October 31, a hunter, Blake Lowry, was due back at Joe's ranch to drop o a horse he'd rented. When he didn't arrive, Joe, who knew where Lowry was hunting, took o on his own horse to bring the hunter back safely. Joe left his wife and five-month-old baby at home and rode o with a warm thermos of co ee and no food. He did not expect to be gone overnight. When Joe didn't return the following morning, his wife called the sheri and reported her husband as missing. The sheri was able to get the Naches Ranger District involved in the hunt for the packer. The search was started immediately.

Joe's wife explained the area where the hunter had told Lowry to hunt. It was an area just west of their home in thick woods.

On November 3, a very unusual event happened. Joe's horse arrived back at his residence. The horse was bareback and seemed to have a sore leg or foot. The rangers were now confining their search in a 320-acre parcel west of the residence. On November 4, searchers found Joe's saddle on the ground, along with the bridle and a few other personal items. They tried to follow some blurred-out tracks in the snow but couldn't track them.

The search to find Joe was terminated on November 6. It is safe to say that everyone involved in the e ort to locate the guide was completely ba led. Joe knew the exact path from where the saddle and bridle were located. There were no tracks from that location back to his residence other than the horse's. Even more confusing is the fact that the hunter Joe was looking for made it out to a road near the end of the search.

The Cascade Range from southern Oregon all the way through to British Columbia has an enormous amount of missing people. I have written about these individuals in my past books. The stories are as confusing as Joe's. Some people knew the area they were in and were lost on a heavily used trail. Others were found under circumstances that defied conventional explanations. Joe Blackbum was never found. He left to take a leisurely ride out to 320 acres near his house. That leisurely ride turned into a death ride. I cannot develop a good theory on what happened.

Donald McDonald

Missing: 12/15/49, Blacksnake Ridge, Walla Walla, WA

Age at disappearance: 17 years

Point of Separation» Weather»

Hunting elk in the Blue Mountains of southeast Washington in the middle of winter is not an easy task, but this is what Jack Farquharson (age twenty-one) and his friend Donald McDonald decided to do in December 1949. Both men were raised in the greater Walla Walla area and had substantial hunting experience.

Both guys were hunting a ridgeline called Blacksnake Ridge. It was cold, and the weather was about to change drastically. Jack was leading the pair and spotted a nice-sized elk and shot it. The two boys started to track the wounded animal. Jack concentrated on tracking the blood and prints in the snow. He eventually found the dead animal and then turned to speak with Donald, but he was gone. Jack called

Donald's name several times, but there was no answer.

He walked back through their tracks, trying to retrace their path, but eventually lost them in the heavy snow.

Jack gutted the elk and brought it back to the camp that he and Donald had set up. The next two days, Jack searched for his friend without finding any trace of him. On Saturday morning, half frozen, Jack Farquharson stumbled into the Walla Walla County Sheri 's O ice and reported his hunting partner missing. The county sheri , local ranchers, friends, and relatives searched for a week for Donald but couldn't locate the hunter. They didn't find his rifle or his clothes—not one item to confirm that Donald was anywhere in the Blacksnake Ridge area. Snowstorms had hit the area the day Donald went missing, and this hampered search e orts and the ability of trackers to follow a path. It seemed that there was little luck in finding Donald alive.

There were a few old and abandoned cabins in the Blue Mountains that Donald may have utilized for shelter. Eventually all were located and checked, but there was no evidence they had recently been used. The search for Donald was abandoned after one week of heavy storms.

In June 1950, there was another search for Donald. People felt that after the snow melted there would be a greater chance to recover his body. A three-day search led by Sheri A. A. Shick produced nothing to confirm Donald was in the area.

It has now been over sixty years since Donald McDonald disappeared, and the reality of his disappearance is hard to understand. It is true that bodies rot and eventually go back to the ground, but boots and rifles sometimes stay for decades, especially rifles. Nothing belonging to Donald McDonald has ever been found.

Bobby Boatman

Missing: 10/14/51, Godman Springs, Walla Walla, WA

Age at disappearance: 14 years

Point of Separation* Weather*

As you read the accounts depicting the facts behind the disappearance of Bobby Boatman, I want you to think about the disappearance of Donald McDonald. The facts behind each disappearance are remarkably similar. Even though they happened in di erent counties, both happened in the Blue Mountains of southeast Washington and

within two years of each other.

An October 16, 1951, article in the Walla Walla Bulletin stated: “Bobby left here Saturday morning with two older men and was last seen on a ridge Sunday morning near Godman Springs, 30 miles southeast of Dayton. His companions spent the day searching for him.”

The morning following Bobby’s disappearance, his friends reported him missing. That first night snow started falling hard in the mountains.

Deputy sheri s, ranchers, and volunteers assisted in the search for Bobby. Authorities stated that they were optimistic they would find Bobby alive because of his background as a Boy Scout and his survival skills. The weather was so bad during this search that the October 19, 1951 article in the Eugene Register- Guard had this: “As much as 10 inches of snow had piled up in some areas when the search was cancelled. Visibility was limited to five feet at time.”

A seven-day search for Bobby was unsuccessful.

It was almost five years to the exact day since he disappeared that law enforcement had their first break in the Bobby Boatman disappearance. On October 9, 1956, hunters in the Blue Mountains found a rifle and a red cap. The items were found near Godman Springs by hunters Billy Watson, Robert Bailey, Albert Bailey, and Jess Black. The rifle was a .30-caliber Remington. Both items were turned over to the sheri . Sheri E. E. “Duke” Warwick took the rifle to a friend of the Boatman’s, who confirmed the rifle was Bobby’s. It was later confirmed that the red cap was also Bobby’s. An October 17, 1956, article in the Walla Walla Bulletin stated: “The red baseball cap of Boatman was discovered in a bush with the rifle nearby, as though he might have dropped both items and taken o running, the Watson party told Warwick. The covered portion of the cap was still identifiable as having been red.”

On October 12,1956, Sheri Warwick took a team back into the area where Bobby’s rifle was found in an e ort to locate the body. An article in the October 20 Lewiston Morning Tribune reported the following: “Bones and clothing in the area believed to be those of a teenage hunter who vanished five years ago were found in the Blue Mountains Thursday under suspicious-stirring circumstances.” Sheri Warwick identified the remains as Bobby Boatman. The in-credible part of the find is described next: “Deputy Sheri Herschel Bowman,

who was at the scene, said evidence indicated the boy's body had been placed under tree roots and covered with dirt, then later pulled from the shallow grave by animals. The bones were partially covered with dirt and debris about 100 yards from where hunters found Boatman's rifle and cap."

This was a very lucky find for the sheri and his men. If it weren't for hunters coming forward with what they had found, the chances of Bobby ever being recovered would have been minimal. One of the last paragraphs in the article is probably one of the most disturbing statements by a law enforcement o icer I have ever read: "Sheri Warwick said that on the basis of the evidence at hand, we don't know if there was foul play in the case. We will look into the possibility." This is disturbing because of other statements made by the sheri 's o ice just three days earlier. On October 17, 1956, Deputy Sheri Billy Burton of Walla Walla County had explained to the media that in 1952 a knife and its sheath and a rope that Bobby Boatman used as a belt were found on a sandbar in Box Canyon. This little tidbit adds a lot to the investigation and should have been directly addressed as a major clue. If there wasn't foul play, how did Bobby's knife end up miles away on a river bar?

I could not find any article or report from the Walla Walla sheri or coroner indicating the cause of death for Bobby Boatman.

Summary

In thirty-plus years of being an investigator, detective, and researcher, and reading thousands of missing persons cases, I have never heard of anyone ever being buried under tree roots.

Hunters who found Bobby's cap and rifle said they believed it looked like they were dropped during Bobby's flight from something—something deadly. Bobby was killed and buried in a highly unique manner—under a tree. Tree roots o er a major barrier to anyone wanting to find the body or retrieve it. I don't think anyone in law enforcement would ever think of digging up trees to find a body. Over time tree roots will completely encase the deceased.

Bobby's knife, sheath, and rope belt were found in a creek bed a great distance from the body. Someone or something took the items o Bobby's waist and carried them from the scene and eventually left them near a creek.

The facts of this case do not add up to a calculated killing. If you are

going to make the e ort of concealing the body by burying it under a tree, why not also bury the rifle and cap? Why would you leave the rifle and red cap lying in an area where they could easily be seen? Why would you take the knife, sheath, and rope and leave them in an area where they could be retrieved?

Bears and mountain lions would not take a knife and sheath and carry it to another location. Animals would leave everything where they found it. I have never heard of any animal burying anything under a tree stump. The location of Bobby's body makes me greatly suspect that the body of Donald McDonald could be buried in a similar manner. They disappeared in too close of proximity to each other and the dates are too close to be ignored. If Donald was also buried under tree roots, it's understandable why his body has never been recovered.

Another similarity is that Bobby's knife and sheath were found in a creek bed. The last similarity between the Boatman and McDonald cases: both young men disappeared when they were on a ridgeline, as was reported by their friends. There are probably other similar cases in this area, I just haven't found them.

Jim Eaton

Missing: 11/26/56, Jim Creek, WA

Age at disappearance: 74 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Hunter

On Monday morning November 26, 1956, Jim Eaton and friend Frank Marker left Maryville, Washington and drove 15 miles to the northeast to Jim Creek, approximately six miles east of Arlington to go deer hunting. Something happened that day, and Jim vanished, what happened next is described in the November 28, 1956, Nanaimo Daily News, "Sheri Bob Twitchell called in a party of 50 volunteers searching for Jim Eaton, about 74, of Marysville. Eaton has been missing since Monday when he became separated from a hunting partner."

Deputy Don Fisher of the Snohomish County Sheri 's O ice ran the search for Jim. Articles about the incident told of sub-freezing temperatures the night the hunter vanished followed by fog that inundated the search area. The sheri 's o ice got assistance in the SAR from airmen from Paine Air Force Base, ground teams and air support were sent, then canceled due to weather. The fog and cold temperatures had the sheri calling o the search temporarily and then

started it again the following day.

This was one of the shortest searches I've ever read about, two days. They never found anything belonging to Jim, and they never located him. The location of this incident is a bit unusual. This did not happen in the high mountains of Washington, but closer to the coast in small hills, a hard place to get lost.

Wagner Robinson

Missing: 11/13/65, Bumping Lake, WA

Age at disappearance: 28 years

Cluster Zone* Weather*

I'd like you to go to a computer and go to Google Maps and look up "Bumping Lake" in Washington. It is just southwest of Goose Prairie and just ten air miles from the peak of Mount Rainier. I have written extensively about Mount Rainier National Park and the many unusual disappearances inside the boundaries of the park.

On November 12,1965, Wagner "Wags" Robinson told his wife Ann that he was driving to the area of Goose Lake, fifty miles northwest of Yakima, to go elk hunting. He said good-bye to their four children and left. The hunter met a group of friends in the area and proceeded into the abyss to hunt. When Wags didn't return on the night of November 13, authorities were notified. The exact location of the incident varies slightly from article to article. Some stated that he was in the area north of Goose Prairie, and others stated he was in the area of Bumping Lake. Su ice it to say, he was just outside the eastern boundary of Mount Rainier National Park. This is a very rugged region known for disappearances.

Many articles stated that searchers had to cope with two feet deep snow as they made their way through the search zone. Four days after Wags vanished, there was this update in the November 17 edition of the Daily Chronicle: "Yakima County Sheri Bert Guns said upwards of 75 men and Explorer Scouts hunted Wednesday for Robinson, who failed to rejoin his hunting party at Goose Prairie near Bumping Lake. Guns said that Robinson may have been hurt in a fall or wounded." Law enforcement requested and got one hundred fifty soldiers from the Third Brigade of the Fourth Infantry Division from Fort Lewis. The men covered some of the toughest areas in the search grids.

The search was formally terminated November 23 because of snow

conditions, cold weather, and the lack of any clues. Friends and family went back to the search area for months after the disappearance, continually looking for anything related to the incident. Nothing was ever found.

Thirty days after Wags vanished, Ann filed for a determination of death in the local courts. She needed this declaration to obtain benefits for her children. The judge granted this request. Understand what this determination means. You will not find Wagner Robinson on any missing persons poster, billboard, and computer list as a missing person, none. You may ask why this is the case: he's not missing; he's dead according to the law. When I first learned of this peculiarity in our justice system, I didn't understand it. What this e ectively does is wipe the slate clean of missing people, and you never really know how many have vanished.

On October 23, 2002, the Associated Press ran an article about this: "The 1965 Disappearance of Man Near Goose Prairie Remains a Mystery." This covered many of the items I explained in the story. It went on to say that he had previously divorced another woman in years past, and this was his second family. He had two children from his first family. This news is not earth-shattering. There were claims by some people who believed they saw Wags after the incident; again this is pretty normal in missing person cases where there is mass publicity. Not one of the sightings was ever validated. The reporter did ask a relative what he thought about what happened: "Tt was as if he'd disappeared o the face of the Earth,' recalled his cousin, Bill Robinson, 80 of Tacoma, who helped look for him in 1965."

It's important to make the connection between the disappearance of Joe Blackburn and Wagner's case. Both men vanished in essentially the same area nineteen years apart. If the incidents happened a few years apart, local authorities would remember and take note. You separate the cases by nineteen years, and nobody remembers. These happened just outside of Mount Rainier National Park, where there is an established geographical cluster of missing people.

Some of the strangest cases I have ever documented happened in Washington, with disappearances occurring during a variety of activities in the woods, from mushroom picking to hunting to merely hiking. Many of these people have never been found. I have always stated there can be nothing worse for a family than not knowing what happened to their missing loved one.

Leonard Vacknitz

Missing: 11/18/65, 3:00 p.m., Sol Duc, WA

Age at disappearance: 43 years

Point of Separation* Canines

The following similarities exist between the preceding case and this one:

• Both hunters

• Both never found

• Both fathers of six

• Both happily married

• Weather hampered both search e orts

• Both lost in the forests of Washington

• Disappearances were just five days apart

Leonard was a married father of six with a great job as an inspector for the Boeing Corporation. He and his family lived in Bothell, Washington.

On November 17, Leonard left the family home, headed for a region on the north side of Olympic National Park called Sol Duc. I've written about another man who disappeared just north of this location. The woods are very thick, and the area is usually wet or moist.

On the morning of November 18, Leonard and his friend Rue Dewey left their camp and headed into the woods. During the day, the hunters got separated. Rue made his way back to camp early that night. Leonard did not. Rue waited for several hours, hoping that Leonard would return; he never did. The Clallam County sheri was called and took control of the search.

The sheri obtained the assistance of local forest rangers and volunteers from the surrounding communities. Bloodhounds were brought in to assist the search e ort and failed to find a scent of the hunter. A November 25, 1965, article in the Port Angeles Evening News had these details late in the search: "Poor weather and dangerous conditions halted the search for Leonard Vacknitz of Bothell. He has been missing from an elk hunting trip in Sol Duc Valley since Thursday." The massive e ort to find Leonard included sheri 's

deputies, civil air patrol, mountain rescue personnel, US National Forest and US National Park rangers, Boeing employees, and Department of Natural Resources personnel.

Search supervisors stated that over eight hundred hours of actual search time were committed to finding Leonard. Teams were baffled that the hunter couldn't be found since Rue knew the location they were hunting, and all you needed to do was follow flowing water downhill, and this would take you to the Straight of Juan De Fuca and roadways and subsequent safety just five to eight miles north.

In past books I have talked about coincidences. Do you believe in them? The facts surrounding Leonard's and Wagner's cases cannot be overlooked. The odds that two men with six children, each hunting in Washington State, disappear within five days of each other and are never found seem astronomical. Don't start getting numb to the disappearances you are reading about. The vast number of people who disappear are found. You are reading about some very unusual incidents that don't make any sense. It is very odd that when you start to profile the cases, picking specific cases that match what you are looking for, that the similarities start to show themselves.

Arthur Norburg

Missing: 12/05/66, Matheny Creek, WA

Age at disappearance: 35 years

Water* Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Bow Hunter* Weather* Missing Clothing

This incident happened on the west side of the Olympic Peninsula just north of the Quinault Indian Reservation and on the north side of Matheny Creek. The Quinault area has long been associated with some of the most unusual phenomena the world can imagine. I have personally written about several people who have vanished from this area and the region just northeast and northwest of Olympic National Park. The strangeness of the area doesn't stop at the Olympic National Park boundary. The cases I have documented where people have vanished inside the park are some of the most unusual I have ever documented.

I have always stated that the disappearances have a close relationship with water. The Olympic Peninsula is surrounded on three sides by huge bodies of water. The region gets significant amounts of precipitation and does not get a lot of foot tra ic from hikers,

fishermen, and hunters.

When I look back at the number of hunters I have documented that have vanished, one type of hunter seems to disappear more than others and is rarely seen alive, bow hunters. I do know of one bow hunter that vanished while armed with a large-caliber handgun and still has never been found: Mel Nadel, of New Mexico. After you finish reading this case, go back to the Montana section and read the Robert Springfield case again. You will see some distinct similarities.

On December 5, 1966, Arthur Norburg was in a hunting camp on the north side of Matheny Creek north of Quinault. The woods in this area are unbelievably thick and rich. The greenery in the area would overwhelm anyone.

Arthur woke early, and he left after breakfast with the others in his party. He was bow hunting for elk. Sometime around midday, Arthur somehow got separated from the rest in his party. Once the group got back to their camp, they waited till dark and Arthur had not returned. Members of the group then left to call the sheri .

Almost immediately after Arthur had vanished, the weather started to turn for the worse. The local sheri tried to gather together three hundred searchers and methodically go through the area where he vanished. A December 8, 1966, article in the Spokane Daily Chronicle stated, “A storm dumped two feet of snow since yesterday in the Matheny Creek Ridge area of the Olympic National Forest where the search centered. Temperatures were below freezing.” The article went on to say that Explorer Scouts, four-by-four rescue units, and the Mountain Rescue Council had all been assisting in the search.

The amount of snow that inundated the search area in this incident is unusual. On December 12, an article in the same paper quoted above stated that there had now been up to six feet of snow dumped in the search area. On December 12, the local sheri stated that the area became too dangerous, and there was no way that Arthur could’ve survived the deep snow and freezing weather. The search was terminated.

There was nothing new to report on the e ort to find Arthur until a June 28, 1967, article in the Port Angeles Evening News', the article stated that a jacket, an arm guard, and a set of finger guards were found June 18 in the Matheny Ridge area. The article stated, “Norburg’s coat was found neatly folded at the base of a tree, according to Je erson County Sheri , Robert Hansen, the area in which

Norburg disappeared and in which the jacket was found was under as much as six feet of snow at the time of Norburg's disappearance." This may mean nothing to you, except you've already read the Montana chapter and Robert Springfield's disappearance: the only two cases of missing hunters that I know about where clothing or accessories were later found neatly folded or rolled. In both cases the hunter's coats were also found at the scene. Think about this fact, if there was six feet of snow on the ground in the area where the jacket was found, how odd would that be to find the coat neatly folded on the ground six months later? I think that is very odd and unusual. I can't think of another instance where any clothing was found six months later in the wild that wasn't damaged in some way by rodents, mammals, or birds, regardless what six feet of snow would do.

Searchers did go back into the area where the items were located and spent several days working in an inside-out search manner attempting to find the victim's remains. They found nothing.

You can now add another very strange case to this area just north of Quinault. You can also add another missing person who was bow hunting for elk that has never been found.

John Stratton

Missing: 10/18/67, Rocky Creek, Selkirk Mountains, WA

Age at disappearance: 79 years

Cluster Zone» Canines» Weather

There are few people who even think about the far northeast corner of Washington State. This area is adjacent to the Idaho border, and I have written about several disappearances in the general area. This part of the state is rugged and gorgeous.

In mid-October 1967, seventy-nine-year-old John Stratton left his home in Park Rapids, Washington, and drove to an area fifteen miles northeast of Colville near Rocky Creek. John lived and hunted the area for years and knew the area extremely well. He left his cabin in the area to hunt and was supposed to be gone just for the day. When he didn't return, he was reported missing on October 21.

The Pend Oreille County Sheri took the lead on the SAR. Their first order of business dealt with finding exactly where he was hunting. That was going to be determined by finding his car. The vehicle was located October 23 by sheri 's deputies. An October 27, 1967, article

in the Spokane Daily Chronicle described where it was located: “Stratton’s car was found on the side of a logging road about three miles from Rocky Creek Road in Pend Oreille County.” The sheri focused on the area near the vehicle and called in resources.

At this point in the SAR, John had been missing for three days. The sheri didn’t waste any time getting additional Bloodhounds. He called for a specialized team from the Olympia area. He also ordered a plane and got it. They were initially searching a small area of the Colville National Forest. The search area gradually grew.

The search for John lasted for seven days after they found his car. The search found nothing. The area they were searching was covered with snow, and few tracks were found. The sheri made a statement that the search was stopped for bad weather and heavy snow. An October 31, 1967, article in the Spokesman Review had this: “Six inches of snow fell in the area- named ‘Seldom-Seen Mountain’ late Saturday and hampered search e orts.”

The total e ort to find John included sixty-five to one hundred searchers, six Bloodhounds, four square miles covered, and a plane.

This area also has been on my radar for years because of a disappearance I documented in Missing 411: Western United States. A small child living at a rural residence on the outskirts of Colville somehow got out of their yard at approximately 4:00 p.m. and out of the view of the parents. The parents searched the yard, screamed for the toddler, did not get a response, and then called the Washington State Police.

Throughout the first night of the disappearance, SAR stayed with it and covered an area at a two-mile radius. They found nothing. Early the next morning, canines were brought in. This is one of the extremely rare incidents that I have ever written about where canines were successful.

The dogs led searchers to a ravine one mile from the house and found the boy’s cap, his pants, and one shoe. Thirty minutes later and farther up the canyon, they found the child alive. The temperatures that night dropped down to thirty-five degrees with a light rain. The child survived. Two hundred people had searched through the night and did not find the victim or the clothing. The next morning: success!

James Annis

Missing: 11/13/71, Skamania County, near Cowlitz County Line, WA

Age at disappearance: 16 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation

The area of this incident is the far western edge of Skamania County, Washington, near Mount Saint Helens. This region is very rugged with a long history of strangeness and missing people. I have written about the disappearance of a photographer from the side of Mount Saint Helens that is one of the most ba ling of all stories I have covered.

In this incident, James Annis was elk hunting with a friend on November 13, 1971, Articles state that somehow James and his friend got separated, and it would appear that James got lost. Three helicopters and more than fifty searchers scoured forty square miles for almost ten days. They did not find one piece of evidence indicating where he might be. There was nothing new to report on the Annis disappearance for almost a year.

On November 5, 1972, hunters were in the region near Cinnamon Peak in Cowlitz County, approximately two miles from the Skamania County line, and found what they believed to be human bones scattered in a wide area. The hunters left the area and notified the sheri .

The finding of the bones made worldwide news because this was the exact area that D. B. Cooper had parachuted out of a Northwest Airliner with two hundred thousand dollars on the eve of Thanksgiving 1971. The sheri mounted a huge e ort to find the remains. On November 6, Cowlitz deputies went into the area, three and a half miles north of Cougar near the Lewis River, two miles west of the county line and approximately one mile west of Ape Cave in a rugged and desolate area of the county. The team spent considerable time accumulating bones, clothing, and other items. The following day a press release indicated that the sheri had found the remains of James Annis.

James had traveled four to five miles from the point he was separated from his friend. Helicopters and searchers did not find the young hunter, and he did not fire his rifle to make searchers aware of his position. It was never made clear what killed the hunter or how long the bones had been in the area. It was obvious from the wide-ranging area the bones were found, animal predation was involved.

Jimmy Du y

Missing: 10/19/73, 2:15 p.m., Little Wenatchee Ridge, Wenatchee Lake, Wenatchee, WA

Age at disappearance: 2 years

Cluster Zone» Point of Separation» Canines

On October 19, 1973, James and Carol Du y parked their camper and truck in a clear-cut area seven miles northeast of Lake Wenatchee in a location known as Little Wenatchee Ridge. While the entire family took a walk around the area of the camper, little Jimmy Du y was misbehaving on the hike, and Carol Du y hit her son for not keeping up with the group, per her own statement in sheri 's department

reports. The family then headed back to the camper to put the kids down for a nap. Thirty-two-month-old Jimmy and eighteen-month-old Natalie were left in the back of the camper sleeping while James took a short hike to hunt and Carol took a walk through the area.

After fifteen minutes of hunting the nearby clear-cut area, James returned to the camper to check on the children and found them still asleep; Carol was still out on her walk but saw James check on the kids. He then circled the clear-cut area where they were parked and joined his wife. When James and Carol were approximately one hundred fifty yards from their children, they heard a scream or screech come from the camper. They ran to a spot where they could see the camper and saw the camper door open. The parents ran to their vehicle and found the back door still opened. Natalie and their two cats were still asleep inside (key point), but Jimmy was nowhere in sight. James immediately checked the Caterpillar tracks beside the clear-cut area, and Carol checked the road. They found nothing and no tracks. The time at this point was approximately 2:15 p.m.

By quarter after three, deputies from the Chelan County Sheri 's O ice had arrived and already notified SAR personnel. The deputies and forest-service employees searched the soft ground near the camper but could not find any prints in the dirt roads that matched the boy's. At 4:20 p.m. James arrived back at the camper from searching and stated that he had not found the boy. At 4:25 p.m. deputies again interviewed Carol and asked her again to explain the circumstances of the disappearance. She did. At 5:00 p.m. deputies interviewed James again, and he repeated the circumstances of the boy's disappearance. He stated that the sound he heard coming from the area of the camper

could have been something similar to a loud baby's cry.

The following day canines were brought to the location and thoroughly searched the area. They found nothing.

For five days following Jimmy's disappearance, searchers performed a massive grid layout involving more than one hundred fifty men, including rescue units, SAR teams, and the sheri 's posse. Helicopters were also brought to the area to search cli s and small valleys. The search produced no evidence of Jimmy Du y's location. At 8:30 p.m. on October 24, the lead deputy from Chelan County called James aside. He told him that he didn't believe his story about his son's disappearance and thought the child had never been in the area. He also told James that he thought the child had been accidentally or intentionally killed and disposed of and that his story was a cover-up. James insisted his story was true and there was no cover-up. The deputy then asked him if his wife had a boyfriend, to which he replied, "Not that I know of."

At eleven thirty the following morning, the formal search operations were terminated. During the extensive follow-up investigation conducted by the Chelan County Sheri 's O ice, one witness described Jimmy Du y as "retarded" and with a very frail build. Most of the witnesses stated that they rarely saw the boy outside of the Du ys' home. It's obvious from the reports that Chelan County did a very extensive follow-up by contacting the Du ys' neighbors, friends, and child protection services. They also attempted to locate evidence of violence against Jimmy, but nothing was found. At one point, investigators requested that Carol and James Du y take a polygraph test, they agreed.

Twelve days after their son went missing in the mountains of Washington, James and Carol Du y were seated in a police interview room taking a polygraph in an e ort to clear their names. Polygraph experts from the Seattle Police Department were utilized to question the Du ys and administer the polygraph. Both parents took the polygraph simultaneously in di erent rooms. In a report written by N. Matzke and D. Gillespie of Seattle PD's polygraph unit, they stated the following after interviewing both parents: "Each subject was given a polygraph examination and it is the opinion that Mr. and Mrs. Du y do not know the whereabouts of their son Jimmy nor did they conspire with each other to cause the disappearance." The passing of the polygraph hopefully focused the Chelan County Sheri 's O ice on finding Jimmy rather than building a case against his parents.

Summary

I was fortunate to get the Chelan County Sheri 's O ice to expend significant resources to get the case file on Jimmy Du y. A records supervisor took an interest in my request and spent hours looking through microfiche attempting to build a case file. Nobody had one inside the detective division; nobody even knew of the case. After more than a month, I was sent the complete case file of over one hundred fifty pages.

This is a truly fascinating case. Jimmy Du y was only slightly older than two. He was frail and could barely get into and out of the camper without assistance. The scream that the parents heard definitely came from the camper and was related to the disappearance. It's very odd that the scream heard by the parents one hundred fifty yards away didn't wake Natalie, who was sleeping in the camper, or their cats.

I am comfortable in saying that I'm 99 percent certain Jimmy was abducted. The parents were at the camper in a matter of minutes. They searched immediately but never found their boy. He had to have been abducted. The unusual part of this abduction is that the family was on a hunting trip; everyone in that area at that time of the year was most likely a hunter and was armed. Whoever took Jimmy Du y was watching when the family took their walk and when James came back to check on the children. The perpetrator(s) waited for James and his wife to be at a safe enough distance and out of view to open the closed camper door, take Jimmy, and make a getaway. Where were they taking Jimmy, and how did they know they could successfully make their escape? How did they know that his parents wouldn't catch up to them?

None of the reports mentioned animal tracks in the area. All people and all vehicles that were in the area were later accounted for through follow-up by the sheri 's department. There is no way a thirty-two-month-old boy could escape the search e orts of professional trackers in the area where Jimmy was lost.

I thought it was a highly risky assertion by the lead Chelan County deputy to accuse James of fabricating facts about his son's disappearance, especially without documented and elaborated facts he could put in his report. I saw none. The frustration among the searchers and deputies was understandable after six days without finding any evidence of Jimmy. I don't blame the deputies for being frustrated, and without knowing that other cases very similar in nature have occurred consistently throughout the United States over

the last seventy-five years, maybe that frustration and allegation against James could be excused. If that comment were made today, especially now knowing that the Du y's played no part in the disappearance, that deputy would be severely reprimanded for his conduct.

SAR reports on this incident indicated that personnel searched two miles out from the camper. That was not enough. Even considering Jimmy's age and frail build, hundreds of reports similar in nature indicate that a search of two miles out from the location of the event isn't su icient. The distance to search involving an event such as this shouldn't be dictated by how far the child could walk; it should be dictated by how far an abductor could carry the victim.

This disappearance did happen in a geographical cluster zone.

In each of the disappearances of small children I have documented in the wilderness, the act always happened at the time the victim was out of view, the point of separation. This isn't mere coincidence or pure luck, these were a calculated act.

Raymond Lee Matlock

Missing: 11/07/98, Raymond, WA Age at disappearance: 28 years Point of Separation* Water* Unknown Cause of Death* Cluster Zone Raymond Matlock enjoyed the outdoors and, specifically, elk hunting. On November 7, 1998, Raymond went to the area of State Route 101 at the Bone River to go elk hunting. It was a remote area just eight miles from his hometown, Raymond, Washington.

Raymond got separated from his hunting companions and was never seen

again. His companions had performed an extensive three-day search before they notified law enforcement.

Raymond, Washington, is located on the Washington coast just forty miles south of Olympic National Park. The southern area of the park and the region of Aberdeen and the Quinault Indian Reservation have had many strange disappearances associated with them.

The Pacific County Sheri 's O ice is the lead law enforcement agency on this case.

According to the missing person website, The Charlie Project, a body was found on the coast of Vancouver Island, Canada just three weeks after Raymond vanished. It took 18 years for the Canadians to identify the body as Raymond's. There were no notations on the condition of the body or the cause of death.

There is one huge issue with where Raymond was located. I checked the current flows o the Washington coast, they flow from the north to the south. Raymond was hunting near the Bone River 125 miles south of the Strait of Juan De Fuca where he was eventually located. His body had to travel 125 miles north up the coast and then ten miles east going down the strait. I have made several presentations about the missing people fitting our profile that have vanished on the Canadian and United States sides of this strait, it's amazing. There is no other place on Earth that has the numbers of missing in such a small area adjacent to water, and it's all males. This is the first time I have a documented case where someone went missing on land and was found more than 100 miles away in another country.

West Virginia

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Lawrence Wright 11 /24/71 • 54 *M

Lawrence Wright

Missing: 11/24/71, Backbone Mountain, VA

Age at disappearance: 54 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* Weather* Cluster Zone

The location of this incident is Backbone Mountain in West Virginia. This is approximately twenty miles south of the Pennsylvania border at the northern edge of the Monongahela National Forest. The location of this incident is an identified cluster zone of missing people.

On November 24, 1971, Lawrence and his son Richard had traveled from Spencer to go deer hunting on Backbone Mountain. Lawrence was a home builder and had a good life that included a great love for the outdoors. Lawrence and Richard had a close bond. They each had discussed what to do if you were lost in the woods, and they had conversations about di erent scenarios. Both had a good understanding of what to do if they were stranded, injured, or lost. The pair arrived at the mountain early in the morning. At its peak, Backbone Mountain is 3,360 feet in elevation. It is located almost adjacent to Maryland and is considered part of the Appalachian Mountain Range. Backbone Mountain is really considered a range of mountains that extends approximately thirty-nine miles. The specific location of this incident is in Tucker County, West Virginia, with the search command center being placed on Highway 219 four miles south of Thomas in Tucker County.

Once the pair was on the mountain, they decided to split up, with each going up one side. Richard started to go up his side and made it nearly to the top without seeing any deer. He turned around and started to go back down to meet at the prearranged location. He got there, and his dad wasn't anywhere to be seen. Richard did hear two gunshots. Thinking this was his father; he went back out to look and couldn't find him. It was at this point that it started to snow hard. Once Richard couldn't locate his dad, he went looking for assistance.

The Tucker County sheri and the US Forest Service both took charge of the search to locate Lawrence. They immediately called and received the assistance of a National Guard helicopter. Searchers were told that Lawrence was an experienced and avid outdoorsman. The o icials thought this was going to be a short event, with Lawrence walking out of the mountains any minute.

O icials were able to get fifty searchers on the mountain during the first thirty-six hours. It continued to snow heavy, and fog got to be a serious issue for the helicopter crew. Searches were o and on for the five days until they were terminated on November 30 because of horrendous weather. They renewed the search briefly on December 11, and that was terminated in two days with nothing found. A December 1, 1971, article in the Charleston Gazette de-scribed the conditions searchers were faced with: "Blume said it is di icult to

search in the mountains. At one place he said, T fell into snow up to my shoulders.'"

In the end, o icials stated that almost one hundred searchers, helicopters, snowmobiles, and four-by-four vehicles participated in the e ort to locate Lawrence. They did thoroughly search the area where Richard had heard two rounds being fired. They didn't find any dead deer or any evidence that Lawrence was in the area.

It's amazing that Lawrence's body was never found. He knew what to do if he was injured, lost, or stranded. Searchers never heard any other shots. Fog and snow destroyed any evidence that may have been on the mountain that may have led searchers to Lawrence. Any tracks would have been obliterated daily from the continuous falling snow.

I feel horrible for Richard's loss and the guilt he probably has from not finding his dad. The area of this disappearance is an unusual place with many missing people.

Wisconsin

Missing Person Date Missing* Age» Sex

Jack Leichtman 11/21/48» 22»M

Ray Carothers 11/18/57, 1:00 p.m.» 69»M

Jack Leichtman

Missing: 11/21/48, Gurney, WI

Age at disappearance: 22 years

Cluster Zone* Point of Separation*

The southern area of Lake Superior near the Wisconsin and Michigan border has many secrets from which we will never get answers. The center of this incident is Gurney, Wisconsin, five miles from Lake Superior and five miles from the Michigan border. There is a center of a cluster of missing people I have documented twenty miles east of this incident.

In November 1948, Jack Leichtman was a twenty-two-year-old man living in Ashland, Wisconsin, on the banks of Lake Superior. On November 21, Jack traveled east to the area four miles west of Gurney and arrived at a deer hunting camp with friends. On that day, he told

friends that he was going to hike four miles west to another friend's camp. He left and the people he was hunting with left their camp and headed home for the week.

On November 26, Jack's brother Joseph and his dad, Leroy, hadn't heard from Jack in almost a week and were surprised when he didn't arrive for Thanksgiving. They made a few contacts, and slowly a story started to evolve. It was learned that Jack had left his hunting camp en route to another camp. It was determined that he never arrived.

Leroy Leichtman contacted Sheri John Shea of Iron County and explained the disappearance. Sheri Shea determined that Jack must've vanished in the area two miles west of Iron County in Ashland County. Jack was walking west from his camp toward the Bad River Reservation. The sheri contacted the Ashland County sheri , and both departments started working together.

Sheri Shea mustered ten Wisconsin game wardens from Mercer and Upson and then got volunteer searchers from Saxon and Gurney. It had now been over five days, and nobody had seen Jack, and nobody knew where he was located.

After three short days, Sheri Shea canceled the e ort to find Jack. They didn't find a trace of the hunter. The age of the victim listed in various articles varied from twenty-one to twenty-three years. He was born and raised in the area and had hunted since he was young. The idea that he got lost in this region doesn't make a lot of sense. He was extremely fit with no health issues.

The reason this case is in this book is because of the area he vanished. This is a cluster zone of missing people. Many of these individuals were never found. The woods were thick around this area, but to think that canines with cadaver training wouldn't find the body months after isn't rational. The body gives out distinct smells during decomposition that even the human nose can smell. Trained canines can smell thousands of times more e iciently than humans. When you read these stories, it appears that dead bodies should be strewn every ten miles in some areas.

I did an extensive archive search years after Jack vanished. He was never found.

Ray Carothers

Missing: 11/18/57, 1:00 p.m., Flambeau River State Park, WI

Age at disappearance: 69 years

Point of Separation* Weather* Illness/ Disability*

There is nothing more valuable to a parent than time with their kids. Ray Carothers was a man that relished family time. In November 1957, Ray was married to Ruth Aitken Carothers, and they had eight children.

On November 18 Ray was in a deer hunting camp at the Flambeau River State Forest forty-five miles south of Gurney. He was hunting with his sons Merlin and Charles and two other men. The hunters had made a pact that they would hunt alone and be at a specific spot at 1:00 p.m. The boys and the two other men arrived at the location. Ray did not. It was starting to snow hard when the group arrived to meet, and they were very concerned about Ray.

The hunters immediately contacted the local sheri and conservation o icers. Just as the searches were getting under way and just after a request was made for a civil air patrol and a Wisconsin Conservation Department plane, something happened, as is described in this April 14, 1958, article in the Milwaukee Sentinel: “Carothers disappeared in the Flambeau River State Forest during a blinding blizzard that unexpectedly dumped 15 inches of snow on the area 25 miles northeast of Ladysmith.” The other major concern expressed by searchers and family was that Ray was a diabetic and did not carry any insulin.

There were articles written around the time that Ray vanished that called the storm that hit the area “one of the heaviest November snowstorms in years swept the area.” In retrospect, the storm was not only unexpected; it was one of the worst for the month of November.

Sheri Clyde Williamson from Hayward took charge of the scene. In spite of the horrific weather, they were able to garner seventy ground searchers to comb the area Ray was last seen. It wasn’t a lengthy search because the weather hindered all attempts to find him.

Ray had many family members that loved him deeply. Family and friends wanted to recover his body and did go back to the area the following April. The April search included one hundred fifty ground volunteers and a civil air patrol plane. They found nothing.

There were many articles over the years about Ray and the unusual nature of the disappearance and the associated frustration by family that they could never locate his body.

I can only speak for myself on this issue, if a beloved family member of mine disappeared in the woods, I would probably spend every spare day o I had looking for them. I do know that many family members who do not receive closure on a missing loved one are tormented by this. I have deep compassion for the Carothers family.

Wyoming

Missing Person Date Missing» Age» Sex

09/16/46-2:00 p.m.» 47» M

09/21/49» 46»M

A.F. Walker

11/25/65» 28»M

Frank Norris

10/24/73»45»M

Tom Garafalo Joseph

Kalaszewski Joe Pfost 10/28/79-9:00 p.m.» 62»M

Charles Gustafson 10/11/2006-6:30 a.m.» 72»M

Terry Meador 10/25/2018» 74»M

A.F. Walker

Missing: 09/16/46- 2:00 p.m., 30 Miles N/O Jackson, WY

Age at disappearance: 47 years

Weather» Point of Separation» Previously Searched

A.F. Walker was a successful rancher living in Lovell, Wyoming. On September 15, 1946, he drove the 170 miles from his home to the Flagg Ranch, thirty miles north of Jackson. The ranch still exists and sits on the Snake River just south of the southern entrance of Yellowstone National Park. Walker brought his two sons and also

traveled with his brother Meri and brother in law Fred Bassett. The men set their camp up just outside the ranch and near their hunting grounds. This September 26, 1946 article in the Jackson Hole Courier explains what happened when the men left camp the first day, “On their first day of hunting, Mr. Walker and the other men left the three younger boys in camp because it was raining, and separated themselves-intending to cover the area between the camp and the Snake River where they were to stop and return to camp. The other men shot an elk and dressed it that morning and returned to camp at 2 in the afternoon. They had expected to see Walker there.”

Once Fred and Meri bagged their kill and started to cook a meal with the boys, they began to realize late that afternoon that something may be wrong. Once darkness enveloped the area, the men decided to go out into the wilderness to look for their partner. They searched until late into the night and found nothing. On the morning of September 17, the men again went into the wilderness and covered the entire area in which Walker would’ve been hunting. The pair returned to camp, and they contacted the local sheri and requested assistance.

Sheri Emory of Jackson county ran the search for A.F. Walker. He was able to get Yellowstone and Teton National Park to send ten rangers, and the Forest Service sent three men and the state game service also sent resources. Once word got back to Lovell that one of their residents was missing, the entire Boy Scout Troop came to camp and assisted in the SAR.

There were many rumors about this case that were not true. One searcher found a pair of boots in the wilderness, and it was reported that they belonged to Walker, they did not. There were also strong rumors that there was some foul play at work, never disapproved.

The initial nine-day search for walker found nothing, even though airplanes, trained searchers and a massive number of volunteers scoured the relatively small area. This September 26, 1946 article in the Jackson Hole Courier had this statement from the sheri , “There had been absolutely no sign of Walker,” said Sheri Emery. “It was raining on the day Mr. Walker vanished which might account for the absence of tracks, but some sort of clue should have presented itself after such a thorough search. The circumstances are peculiar,” continued Emery, “since the man was lost in such a small area.” The sheri ’s words are telling. You can tell that the facts surrounding the event and the total loss of evidence was bothering him.

There was a formal two-week search for Walker followed by

additional searches by friends and relatives that lasted well into October. The headlines in the October 17, 1946, Casper Star-Tribune was this, “Deep Snow Forces End of Search for Hunter.” All searches were over for Mr. Walker.

There was no additional information about Mr. Walker’s disappearance until a September 23, 1948 edition of the Jackson Hole Courier, “Two hunters, Bill Barber and Justin Werner, hunting near the south boundary of Yellowstone Park two miles east of the south entrance September 14, came upon the scattered bones, a knife, rags of clothing, and a rusty gun. They were identified as the remains of AT. Walker, 47 of Lovell who was lost just two years ago.” The hunters had taken the remains to the sheri , and he had them identified by Walker’s brother.

Sheri Emery was interviewed about the location of the remains of A.F., and if it was possible, should he had been found by searchers? Emery stated that Walked was 3/4 of a mile outside of the primary area he thought the hunter would be. He did say that it was possible that many searchers walked right by the body and never saw it.

The remains were sent to the coroner’s o ice. He did have some larger bones to examine. The determination was that he could not determine the cause of death.

This disappearance is so similar to dozens and dozens of other cases I have documented. Walker was found close to where he was supposed to be hunting, 3/4 of a mile in the wilderness is not that far. They knew he would never cross into Yellowstone National Park and the discovery was made just 50 yards south of the southern boundary, a perimeter point that was probably used by SAR personnel.

Frank Norris

Missing: 09/21/49, Gros Ventre, northwest of Pinedale, WY

Age at disappearance: 46 years

Point of Separation* Illness/ Disability* Cluster Zone

Frank Norris and his wife traveled from their home in Shoshoni to Gros Ventre on a hunting trip. They booked the trip at Falers Hunting Camp, which is located at the head of Gros Ventre River. The couple rented two horses and made the twelve-mile ride to Grizzly Basin. This location is surrounded by small lakes and deep valleys at the ten-thousand-foot elevation. Once at the basin, the couple established

their base camp and made their daily trips.

On Wednesday, September 21, Frank went out alone for the day while his wife stayed at camp. He never came back. Mrs. Norris rode back to Faler's and said she needed help to locate her husband. The sheri was called, and a search team from Faler's rode o in search of Frank.

The Faler search team located their rented horse walking back toward their main camp alone. The horse was found with its reins tied together, and Frank's gloves were stu ed in the opening below the saddle horn. His rifle was found in its scabbard with a full magazine. The search team briefed Lester Faler and Mrs. Norris on what they found. Both Lester and Mrs. Norris validated that Frank never dismounted and tied his reins; he always let them hang loose, so the horse would not run o . Mrs. Norris told Sheri Olin Emory that her husband had a weak lung and rarely dismounted to walk any significant distance.

Frank was reported missing in Teton County, even though the Faler camp is in Sublette County.

I sat with a group of law enforcement friends, and we talked through the Frank Norris case. First, Frank had a medical condition; he would not and could not walk far. He had a regular, known practice where he would not tie the horse reins together before dismounting. His gun was still in the scabbard, and the magazine was full. Let's look at the reasonable possibilities of what happened.

Frank could have shot an animal, gotten to it, and had an argument in the field with another hunter, who killed and buried him in the wild. Scenarios similar to this happen more often than many know, but this isn't what happened with Frank. His gun was found with a full magazine and not fired. The gun was still in the scabbard and recovered by searchers. If Frank had been killed by a serial killer or just an angry person, the odds that they would have taken his firearm are fairly high, it is a prized possession.

Maybe Frank dismounted to use the bathroom (again, a scenario that we do not believe occurred). Frank's wife and the Falers stated that Frank would never tie the reins together and dismount the horse, ever, so discount this option.

It is possible that Frank was riding the horse without his gloves on when he was knocked to the ground by a branch, accidentally hit by a stray bullet, or victimized in some other manner and mortally hit the

ground. In counsel with guides and fish-and-game o icials, I have determined that it is extremely rare that a wild animal would attack a rider on a horse; a horse has a pretty good radar when danger is present. If Frank was reluctant to leave the comfort of the horse, maybe this could have happened, though you'd think the horse would have some type of injury secondary to Frank's, none was noted.

The standard scenarios in which hunters and hikers go missing and are later found don't fit the Norris case. As I've searched through hundreds of horse-related missing cases, I've come to re-alize that Frank's case is not as unique as I first thought. There are dozens and dozens of missing people in North America who have disappeared under similar bizarre and unexplainable circumstances. Why hasn't the press addressed these facts for the public? Why has the press allowed local, state, and federal law enforcement to list people as dead or deceased when there is no evidence they are dead? It's a very easy way to wipe their slate clean, claim there is no issue, and ignore a continuing problem that is plaguing the North American wilderness. These people are listed as deceased, and their bodies are never found.

An extensive archival search revealed several articles on Frank Norris and his disappearance. The last article I could find was in the Billings Gazette, December 7, 1949, with the following headline: "Four Wyoming Hunters Lose Lives in Season." As I browsed the article, I found Frank's name and presumed they found his body. The reality of the article and what I have discovered during my research on missing people should be of concern to the public. The article stated, "He disappeared in the Grizzly Basin sector of Gros Ventre Country north of Pinedale September 21 and has not been seen since." This is all the article stated about Frank. It went on to describe three other hunters that had been killed by gunfire. Again, the article stated four Wyoming hunters lost their lives, but there is no proof that Norris is dead. He is still missing. The act of declaring someone dead while missing in the wild is a slippery slope and is much more common than the public understands. It is a method for local sheri , state, or federal law enforcement to eliminate a missing person statistic and terminate any other expenses associated with the case. It is also a method to eliminate any possibility that there may be an issue with ongoing disappearances in that jurisdiction. With the advent of the Internet and mandatory reporting of missing children, any opportunity that law enforcement may have of eliminating a long list of missing people on their website will be taken advantage of. The best I can determine is that Frank Norris has never been found, and he is one of six people missing in the mountain range that runs northwest from near Lander to Teton National Park. You will not find this information on any

website or database. Where have these people gone?

Tom Garafalo

Missing: 11/25/65, Lozier Hill, thirty miles north of Jackson, WY Age at disappearance: 28 years

Weather*

Tom Garafalo was a biologist for the state of Wyoming Fish and Game Department. He lived in Laramie and loved the outdoors. On Thursday, November 25, 1965, Tom made his way to Lozier Hill on the east side of Grand Teton National Park for an elk hunt. The area around the hill is filled with lakes and rivers, and the elevation varies between 7,000 and 7,500 feet. Tom had only planned to hunt for two hours on Thursday, so it was assumed that he didn't carry a lot of equipment.

Once it was determined that Tom was missing, the state Fish and Game Department sent airplanes to search for him and his vehicle. The vehicle was found Saturday, and an extensive area search started on Sunday. Teton County sheri Carl Roice led the search and indicated that there was eighteen to twenty inches of snow in the area. Searchers were unable to utilize their snowshoes because of the deep powder. Carl stated that if Tom had remained in the Lozier Hill area since Thursday, the chances of him being alive were very slim. He stated that evening temperatures had fallen to fifteen degrees or colder.

I only located one article about Tom Garafalo. There were no follow-up articles and nothing indicating he was ever found. Because this happened to a man that was an expert outdoorsman and made a living in the outdoors, the fact he disappeared in an area he knew well seems bizarre.

Joseph Kalaszewski

Missing: 10/24/73, Ten Sleep, WY

Age at disappearance: 45 years

Weather* Disability/ Illness

In conducting the background research for this story, I found that the victim had lived in Green Bay and Marinette, Wisconsin, cities that are both on Lake Michigan. As I have stated many times, I am closely

following where people were raised and lived as compared to where they disappeared. Many people have vanished who lived their life near the Great Lakes, the majority near Lake Michigan.

Wyoming is a state I have written about many times because of the unusual nature of the disappearances occurring in remote areas. There are portions of The Equality State that have big trees and thick ground cover, but a few of these cases happen in areas where there isn't much on the ground to impede searchers in finding the victim. The region of this disappearance had few trees.

In early October of 1973, forty-five-year-old Joseph Kalaszewski lived in Marinette, Wisconsin, 50 miles north of Green Bay on Lake Michigan. Joe and his son Joe Junior had been planning a hunting trip with two friends to Wyoming. The group got into their car and drove to an area thirty-four Miles south of Ten Sleep, Wyoming in Washakie County. The group arrived safely in the Big Trails area and established their camp. Soon after arriving Joseph senior started to come down with an illness that was believed to be emphysema. He was driven to the Washakie County Memorial Hospital in Worland where he was hospitalized.

While Joe senior was in the hospital, he told his son and the others to go back to their hunting site and check on him in a few days. Three days after he was placed under observation, Joe was released and found a location in town that would rent him a vehicle. He drove the car and headed for the hunting camp. The vehicle was found abandoned twenty-nine miles south of Ten Sleep and five miles from the hunting camp. Washakie County Sheri James Warila took charge of the SAR. He called in resources from Ten Sleep, Worland and Warila that included two airplanes, equestrian teams, ground searchers and support groups. There was this article in the November 2, 1973, edition of the Wausau Daily Herald that shed light on the search, "The search for a Wisconsin hunter missing since October 24 from his hunting camp near here was abandoned Tuesday night when heavy snow blanketed the area." The article got a few details incorrect. Joe was not missing from his camp, he was five miles from that location, and his rental car was on the side of the road. The vehicle was located twenty-nine miles south of Ten Sleep.

The SAR was started again after the snow stopped, but it was halted again when heavy snow again hit the region. All formal searches ended on November 10, a lengthy search period for a small county.

I've written many stories where a vehicle is found on the side of the

road abandoned, the victim cannot be found, and trackers can't find a sign of where the driver went. When you sit and contemplate the possibilities, did the vehicle's engine suddenly stop, did the driver see something, was there a medical emergency, did he stop to use the restroom and something happen? When you look at this part of Wyoming from a Google air map, there is minimal ground cover. It's hard to understand how two airplanes would miss someone walking in this area, but then again, this has happened too many times to count.

Joseph Kalaszewski was never found.

Joe Pfost

Missing: 10/28/79- 9:00 p.m., Burgess Junction, Y

Age at disappearance: 62 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Canines

Winter months in Wyoming can come with brutal weather. If you are going to walk into the wilderness in late November, you better be dressed for below zero temperatures, 50 miles per hour winds and blizzard conditions. The forest can be very unforgiving. In early 1979, 62-year old Joe Pfost moved from Florida to Casper Wyoming. I don't think there are two states in North America that have such a drastic change in winter temperatures than Wyoming and Florida.

Pfost arrived and quickly made friends who enjoyed hunting. Pfost and two friends left Casper on October 26, 1979, for a weekend of hunting. They traveled to an area six miles north of Burgess Junction, fifteen miles south of the Montana border.

On October 28, Pfost and his friends entered the woods, and Pfost did not come out. This October 31,1979 edition of the Billings Gazette gives details about what happened to the Casper resident, "The hunter has been missing since Sunday when he became separated from hunting companions near the Dry Fork Ridge area north of Burgess Junction. Heavy storms in the mountains and a blocked mountain road prevented authorities from reaching Bear Lodge to begin to look for the man until late Monday night. Tuesday, three tracking dogs were used by sheri 's deputies as they proceeded with a search." Various articles stated that Dry Fork Ridge was just six miles northeast of Bear Lodge, I did confirm this.

The sheri brought resources from Sheridan, utilized additional hunters and volunteers that combed the area looking for the hunter. Articles

confirmed that Pfost was reported missing at 9:00 p.m. although they expected him back before dark. By the time they contacted authorities, there was a full-blown winter blizzard inundating the hunting area. The sheri stated that the hunter was last seen wearing an insulated coat and hunting pants.

On Friday, November 2, another storm hit the search area that caused the sheri to terminate the hunt for Pfost. The family was not happy with the sheri 's decision and eventually made a public statement in the November 29, 1979 edition of the Billings Gazette, "But Pfost's daughter, Mary Brannon who lives in West Virginia, said she didn't think everything that could have been done was done. She also said that the family was postponing and additional searches to spring. "Later in the same article was this, "Mrs. Brannon said the family had spent $10,000 on the search, and Pfost's wife, Elizabeth Pfost said the family even employed a clairvoyant from Orlando, Florida, Nov 17-18, who told them she believed Pfost might be in an old Indian cave." I have had many readers tell me that they believe some of these missing people may be in some type of underground area, alive and that is why dogs cannot pick up their scent.

There were several additional searches for Pfost sponsored by family and friends, and they never found anything to indicate where the hunter was located. There was one exciting find that was never confirmed to be left by the missing hunter. One searcher found a note tacked to a tree that stated, "heading down gulch from mountain ridge." This was located in the search zone, and it was never confirmed to be Pfost's. Searchers did thoroughly cover the entire region the letter was found and didn't come up with anything.

There were no other updates on the Pfost case until this July 14, 1981 edition of the Casper Star-Tribune, "Johnson (Sheridan County Sheri) said Pfost's remains were found Sunday in the Dry Fork Creek area by three fishermen from Sheridan. Identification in pockets of clothing found by the bones indicated the remains were Pfost, the sheri said. His body was found about 15 miles north of Burgess Junction, in a drainage that flows into the Little Bighorn River." I read this coast three times to ensure I had it correctly, and I did, 15 miles north of Burgess Junction. The hunter was last seen six miles north of the junction and was located 15 miles north of the same spot, meaning, he traveled 9 miles further note. Survivorman Les Stroud once told me that nobody was a straight line in the wilderness; you can double the mileage; nine miles could be 18 miles traveled.

The coroner could not determine the cause of death, but they

theorized he died from exposure.

Charles Duane Gustafson

Missing: 10/11/2006, 6:30 a.m., Medicine Bow National Forest, Arlington, WY

Age at disappearance: 72 years Cluster Zone* Point of Separation* • Canines* Weather Charles Gustafson was a man that enjoyed the outdoors and specifically loved hunting. Over the years he found that

hunting Wyoming elk was more enjoyable than hunting the woods near his home in Beltrami, Minnesota. Charles was a husband and father. He and

his wife, Patricia, raised four daughters.

In early October 2006, Charles left his home and traveled to Arlington, Wyoming, for his tenth year of elk hunting. His partners were his cousin and nephew. The trio drove eight miles south to the intersection of Forestry Roads 111 and 129 near Stud Creek and established their camp.

On October 10,2006, the three hunters woke early, discussed the daily plans, and decided they would hunt alone. Late that afternoon, Charles had not returned to camp. At near dark, an area logger found Charles and determined he was lost. The man was nice enough to drive him back to his camp. Relatives later stated that it was felt that Charles might have had some type of short-term orientation issue.

On October 11, the three hunters again woke early, had breakfast, and Charles stated that he wanted to hunt alone. He had a global-positioning trail device, map, compass, Winchester 30-06 rifle with a three-by-nine scope, lunch, extra ammunition, water, and a knife. The group agreed to meet back at camp late that afternoon.

Again, Charles didn't make it back to camp. When darkness hit the area, Charles's cousin fired three rounds into the air to notify the hunter where their camp was located. They received three rounds fired back. They felt he was now oriented and would make his way back. He didn't.

The Carbon County sheri was called and notified that Charles was a missing person.

Family members were very optimistic that Charles would be just fine. He had been a wilderness survival expert in the US Air Force, was in perfect health, and was still mentally sharp. He was dressed appropriately for any inclement weather.

Carbon County sheri Jerry Colson led the search to locate Charles. They brought in ATVs, equestrians, ground teams, and a series of tracking dogs. The dog teams they brought were never able to track a scent. The sheri upped his game and requested and obtained a helicopter from Warren Air Force Base.

This area of the search was just twenty miles north of the Colorado

border and twenty-five miles west of Laramie. The mountains aren't extremely tall, but there are many steep rock outcroppings that are gorgeous.

Searchers fired rounds into the air and called out Charles's name; the helicopter flew at the level of the treetops. The e ort never got a return and pilots saw nothing on the ground indicating where Charles was located.

On October 16, Sheri Colson received a blizzard advisory from the US Weather Service, indicating a storm was headed into the area and expected to drop ten to fourteen inches of snow. The determination was made to terminate the e ort to locate the elderly hunter. There was an October 17 article by the Associated Press that depicted the search and subsequent e ort. The following quote explains the feelings of the Gustafson family: "'He is in excellent health. This is most perplexing to the family. It just doesn't make any sense,' she [one of Charles's daughters] said. Gustafson had both a compass and GPS equipment, his brother James Gustafson, told the Herald. 'It's like he just vanished,' he said." Charles was one of the most experienced men I have ever written about when it comes to wilderness survival. Maybe the batteries failed on the GPS device he was carrying. But he was also carrying a map and compass and was an expert in utilizing them. He also knew how to shelter in place, keep warm, and survive in a bad storm. He was obviously alive the night he vanished as he fired three rounds back in response to his cousin shooting rounds. The temperatures for the first few nights he was missing got down to the thirties. This was not life threatening for someone dressed appropriately and with the survival skills he possessed.

In the years since Charles disappeared, his body has not been found.

In December of 2007, Charles's wife, Patricia, petitioned the Minnesota courts for a declaration that Charles was deceased. She was granted the petition. Legally, Charles is no longer missing; he is deceased.

I would hope that another hunter finds Charles's remains and his family can obtain closure.

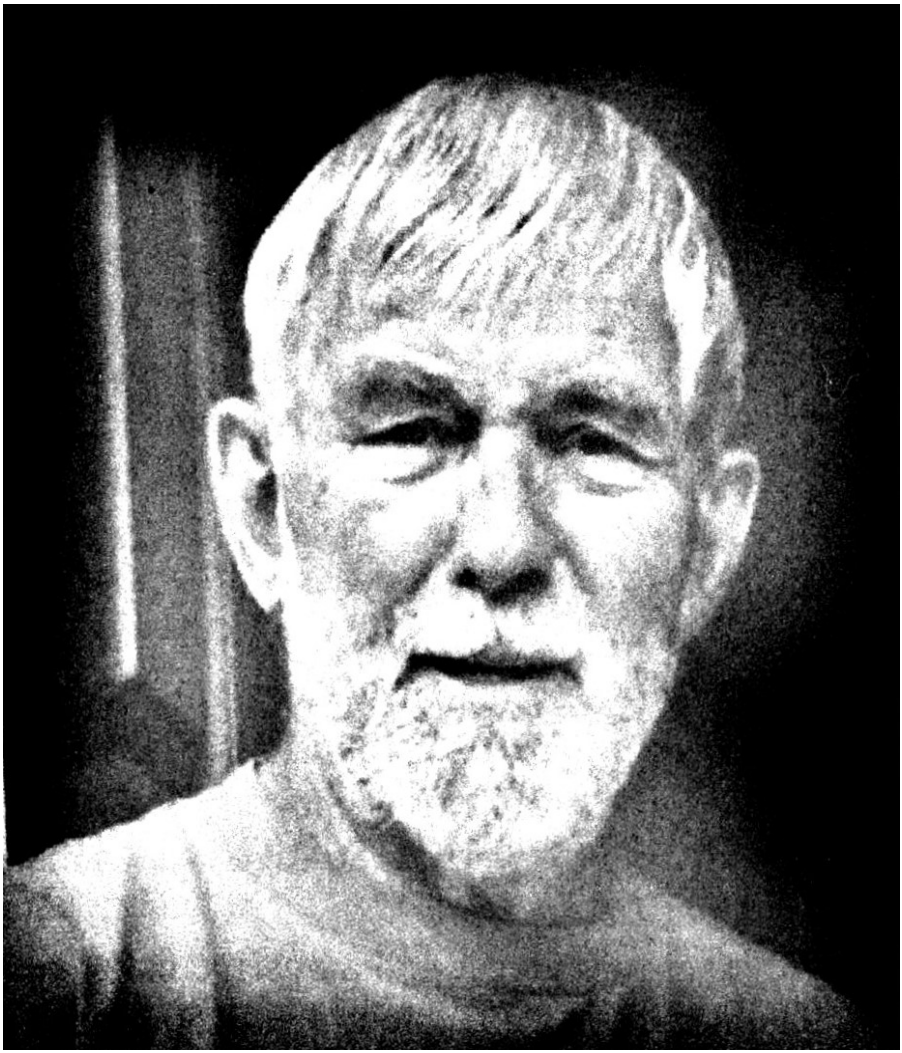
Terry Meador

Missing: 10/25/18, Pine mountain, WY

Age at disappearance: 74 years

Weather* Canines

You have now read the chapter on Wyoming cases and realize that something happens to these men when they are alone and in an isolated area. The location of this incident is very isolated, lonely and how this victim was not located is beyond my understanding.



In October of 2018, Terry Meador was a longtime resident of Rock Springs, Wyoming where he retired from teaching. Terry enjoyed the outdoors and specifically liked hunting. He made the hour- long drive south from his home to a region near Pine mountain just north of the Colorado border. He was driving his Blue, 2013 Chevrolet truck on October 25 and was north of the Mountain. This area does not have any significant ground cover, no trees, maybe some small sagebrush. The dirt road in this one area had a large ditch that ran parallel to the road that he got his left side tires stuck in. He was exactly 2 3/4 miles from the summit of Pine Mountain and eleven miles west of Highway 430. The truck was stuck, what happened after this is anyone's guess, Terry Meador vanished.

A friend of the retired teacher knew he was hunting and realized he wasn't back when he stated he would. The friend drove to the area and found the truck, searched for the retired teacher and notified the Sweetwater County Sheri . The friend stated that the truck was 35 miles south of Rock Springs.

The sheri gathered together an impressive list of resources to search for the hunter. They were able to field 150 ground searchers into this remote area. A November 4, 2018 statement on the Sweetwater County Sheri website had these details, "Knowing that storm conditions were forecast for today, Lowell put out a call for volunteers for a search on Saturday, November 3, to stay ahead of adverse weather. "A November 14,2018 article in the Oil City News had this, "A statement from the SCSO says that over 60 square miles have been

searched by teams on foot and on horseback, canine teams, people with STV's, four-wheel drives, drones, helicopters and fixed- wing aircraft on and around Pine Mountain. All structures within the search have been checked. Lowell said low temperatures and adverse weather conditions have now compelled a suspension of official search and recovery operations." Sixty square miles seems like a massive area to cover in a search, but with such a small number of trees and bushes, you can cover a lot of ground quickly. I noticed that they utilized drones in the e ort, a smart move. What is not stat-ed here is that a helicopter from the University of Utah Air Medical Center also was used to look for Terry. The total search lasted three days.

These cases may start to seem repetitious, but that's the point. This is to make the public aware of how bizarre these disappearances are once you get into the minutia. If you put yourself into the mind of Terry, what would you have done with your truck stuck. I think I would've followed the dirt road out the way I came and get to a highway to ask for assistance. If I knew the region as good as he did, I may cut through the open pastures to save time on the hike.

I have documented many cases where vehicles were abandoned in illogical places. Many times, the window is rolled down as though the driver was either listening to something or trying to get a better view. I don't know if Terry's window was down or up, or even if his rifle was located in the truck.

I did a search of our database for cases in this area and found one other incident just ten miles northwest of where Terry disappeared, that is close. In Missing 411- Eastern United States, I told the story of a sheepherder in March of 1942 that was scouting the area looking for good ground to bring his animals, he disappeared. There was a massive search, he wasn't located even though they knew exactly where he would be located. Two years after the disappearance, two other sheepherder friends went back into the area and found the victims skeleton exactly where he stated he'd be, in the middle of the original search area. There was no determination on the cause of death.

One hundred and forty miles east of Terry's last location, and five to ten miles north of the Colorado border there are three people missing, one being a hunter.

Wyoming has some of the most unique cases I've ever documented.

CANADA

Alberta

Mice;™ Person Date Missing» Age» Sex

Rhonda Runningbird 03/26/95» 25»F

Tom Howell 09/12/2005» 46»M

Rhonda Laureen Runningbird

Missing: 03/26/95, Swan Lake Recreation Area, Rocky Mountain House, AB

Age at disappearance: 25 years

Disability/ Illness* Missing Clothing

Rhonda Runningbird, her husband, their eighteen-month-old baby, and her husband's aunt drove into the Swan Lake Recreation Area for hunting. The truck supposedly got stuck in the mud, and the husband hiked into the bush to get help. The closest residence or business was approximately thirty miles away.

Darkness hit the area, and the aunt states that it was at this point that Rhonda also left to get help. Rhonda was supposedly in bad health. Relatives state that Rhonda wore a kidney colostomy bag and was scheduled for surgery five days after she was reported missing. Relatives do not believe that Rhonda could have walked far because of her condition. Early the following morning, Rhonda's husband returned to the truck. The aunt and the husband were stranded an additional night with the baby and still had not seen Rhonda. Another truck eventually came by, and the husband used the driver's cell phone to call a relative to obtain assistance.

The husband and the aunt eventually got home and reported Rhonda missing. After an exhaustive search, law enforcement stated that they found an unused colostomy bag, a set of Rhonda's clothing that she may have been wearing, and eyeglasses. Law enforcement o icials did not believe that Rhonda could have survived the elements. They called o the search several days later.

It is presumed that Rhonda died in the wild, but she is still listed as missing. How did Rhonda's clothing become removed from her body?

Tom Howell

Missing: 09/12/2005, Limestone Mountain, Caroline, AB

Age at disappearance: 46 years

Bow Hunter*

Tom Howell was an avid outdoorsman and bow hunter. In September 2005 he went sheep and moose hunting near Limestone Mountain outside of Caroline, Alberta. The mountain is approxi-mately thirty miles southwest of Rocky Mountain House. The summit of the mountain is 6,200 feet and is part of an extended ridgeline running north to south.

Tom's boss filed the missing person report, and several days later RCMP found Tom's truck near the mountain on Forestry Trunk Road. Tom had parked his truck and apparently taken his ATV, loaded with equipment, to drive closer to his hunting location.

SAR personnel found Tom's covered ATV at the base of Limestone Mountain. They dropped a ground crew at the location, who performed an extensive search of the region but found nothing. At his truck, they did find receipts for one hundred dollars' worth of groceries he had purchased prior to his hunt.

Bow hunters are quite di erent from hunters who use firearms. Bow hunters must use stealth, quiet, and surprise to get their trophy. The hunter must sneak within a very close shooting range to get a quality shot. Part of that stealthy behavior also means that they may surprise predatory animals, which is sometimes dangerous. In Tom's instance it is very surprising they did not find his pack, bow, clothes, campsite—nothing. He completely disappeared. Tom's family was told by SAR that the area was so rough and dangerous that they decided not to participate in the search.

British Columbia

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Kenneth Duncan 11/27/43-3:00 p.m.* 21* M

Leslie Heal 11/05/44-1:30 p.m.* 26*M

Frank Johnson 09/06/45* 65* M

Wallace Marr 11/19/62* 30*M

Wally Finnegan 11/04/89* 51*M

Raymond Krieger 08/28/92-9:00 p.m.* 48*M

Tom Leonard 10/02/2005* 40*M

Raymond Salmen 05/28/2013* 65*M

Kenneth Duncan

Missing: 11/27/43-3:00 p.m., Shawnigan Lake, BC

Age at disappearance: 21 years Weather* Point of Separation* Area Previously Searched* Cluster Zone

When I see a headline that reads, “Mysterious Death Ba les Police,” I’m hooked. When the story involves a missing hunter in a location that is a geographical cluster zone, I’m investigating it.

In November of 1943, Kenneth Duncan was a shipyard worker at the Victoria Machinery Depot on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Kenneth worked the night shift and did work the evening of November 26. He slept for an hour and then joined his friend, Claude Collington for a drive to the area of Shawnigan Lake for deer hunting.

Just before dawn on November 27, Kenneth and Claude arrived at a location called the Silver Mine Trail Cabin near Shawnigan Lake. Kenneth was a novice hunter, Claude was a very experienced outdoorsman, 60-years old and knew the island quite well. The pair met with other hunters, Albert Lamb, and two Gillespie brothers. The group left that morning and together hunter the area around the cabin, shot one deer and returned to rest that afternoon. This December 1, 1943 article in the Times Colonist explains what happened next, “Duncan, according to other hunters did not want to go out into the woods again, and the four left him while they went on a second hunt. On returning to the cabin, Duncan was missing.” The hunters called for the young hunter and then shot o several rounds just before dark. Later in the evening, three of the hunters walked to a high plateau a half mile from the cabin and fired o a series of 12 shots; there was no response. It was at this point that the group decided to contact authorities. Several articles made a special note that the hunters had stated that the woods were very foggy the day they hunted, and it could’ve been easy to get lost

Hundreds of searchers converged on Shawnigan Lake. Groups from logging camps, Militia Rangers, game wardens, local law enforcement and family all scoured the mountainsides looking for Kenneth. The Militia Rangers called in 80 men who searched shoulder to shoulder out to a distance of three miles from the cabin; they found nothing. Family members and friends could not believe that nobody had seen anything related to Kenneth. The searches continued for weeks. Here was a standard description of the search e orts as was found in the December 2, 1943 edition of the Vancouver Sun, “More than 50 rain-soaked searchers returned from combing the thickly-wooded area between Shawnigan Lakeland Kokailah Ridge Wednesday night

without finding a trace of Kenneth Duncan, 21 Victoria hunter missing since 3:00 p.m. Saturday."

This case took an odd twist months after the disappearance. There was a rumor that Kenneth had been murdered and his body dumped in the lake. Police dragged the water looking for a body, interviewed witnesses and essentially came up with nothing to support the allegations. It was an odd twist to a hunter lost in the woods.

The case went stale for almost three years until a group of hunters was back in the same area where Kenneth vanished and made a surprising discovery. This October 17, 1946 article in the Windsor Star explains what was found, "Last Sunday three Victoria hunters, J.F. Wratten, T. Magnail, and Bob Redgrave found an army-type boot with human foot bones encased in a gray sock. Provincial police were notified and with Wratten, and Magnail found the boot. Within 30 yards of the skeleton was found with a 35 caliber Win-Chester automatic rifle close by an Indian sweater among the bones. The skeleton was left where it lay until a coroner and doctor reach the spot." The location of the remains was only a mile and a half from the cabin where Kenneth was staying. The Duncan family was notified, and Kenneth's dad identified the sweater and rifle as belonging to his son.

After the discovery of the remains, there was this statement in an October 17, 1946 article in the Times Colonist, "The area where the remains were found had been thoroughly searched by the Pacific Coast Militia two days after Duncan had been reported missing."

The coroner's o ice on the island did an inquest into Kenneth's death. A determination was made that he died of natural causes. There were no gunshot wounds to the body, and a live round was found in his rifle, meaning he had not accidentally shot himself. Readers need to understand that the coroners were guessing on the reason the young hunter died. They had a skeleton to deal with, nothing else. They could not determine if he died from exposure, natural causes or some other cause. They did make a note that the remains were scattered, indicating there had been post-death predation to the remains.

This case contains facts I have written about hundreds of times.

Kenneth Duncan was located close to his cabin. Hundreds of people crisscrossed the area where his body was eventually found, and they discovered nothing. Three years later his remains are located in a region that had been previously searched, probably many times. When Kenneth entered the woods, it was foggy, when SAR members went

out to search, they encountered rain. Weather played a significant role in the disappearance and search. When the hunting group was together in the morning hours after they first arrived, everything was fine. It was only after three hunters left the cabin and Kenneth remained behind did something happen. Why did Kenneth leave the cabin alone when he told the others he didn't want to go out? We do know that he had only one-hour sleep and was probably exhausted and needed rest. This is one of many cases that have similarities associated with missing people on Vancouver Island.

Leslie Heal

Missing: 11/05/44- 1:30 p.m., Cowichan Lake, BC

Age at disappearance: 26 years

Weather* Point of Separation* Cluster Zone

You just read the story about the disappearance of Kenneth Duncan on November 27, 1943, from Shawnigan Lake. Twenty miles southeast from Shawnigan Lake and 343 days after Duncan vanished, another hunter disappeared under very similar circumstance, this time the location was Cowichan Lake.

In November of 1944, Leslie Heal was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and assigned to Patricia Bay. He was married to his wife, Yvette and they had two children and lived near Sidney. He was known as a very experienced outdoorsman and hunter.

Leslie was o on weekends and on November 4, he and friend J. Macbeth joined another buddy, and they went to Camp 10 near Lake Cowichan deer hunting.

On November 5, the three friends got separated while hunting. At 1:00 p.m. J. Macbeth heard one shot fired and a loud shout. He didn't think much about it and thought he'd hear from Leslie at the end of the day. The hunters went back to camp and Heal never arrived. They fired shots that night and heard nothing in return. They waited at camp till early Monday morning and then drove back to the city to report Leslie as missing. Macbeth knew something serious had happened because both were supposed to return to their duty station, Patricia Bay, that morning.

The search for the RCAF member got started in earnest Tuesday morning. Seventy soldiers from Colwood camp, 55 airmen from Patricia Bay, 50 area woodsmen and guides and countless local

citizens all responded to search for Leslie. It was a three-hour hike from where vehicles could be parked to the location Macbeth last saw Heal. It was explained to searchers that Heal would hunt at the mountain top, and the others would be downslope. Searchers were told that their target was last heard from at 1:00 p.m. when they heard a shot and thought they heard him shout. Tuesday's e orts produced no results.

On Wednesday, 75 additional soldiers arrived for more search support. People were walking areas just feet apart and were not seeing anything of value.

In Missing 411- LAW I wrote about the disappearances of aircraft and their association with missing people. This November 7, 1944 article in the Vancouver Sun had these shocking details, "Heal is lost not far from where a bomber crashed last April 25. The crew of the bomber, killed in the crash were buried on the mountain." This was not the only aircraft that had an odd association with the disappearance of Heal.

Seventy miles east of Cowichan Lake is Abbotsford, British Columbia, three miles from the United States border. Just as the search for Heal was heating up, this November 10 article in The Province had these facts, "All available aircraft in Western Air command are still searching for a Liberator bomber and its eleven-man crew missing since early today after leaving it RCAF Abbotsford Base on a routine flight." Then there was this article in The Province on November 15, 1944,"Ten men are aboard an RCAF Canso flying boat which disappeared during a routine flying patrol from its West Coast base late Tuesday (11/14). It is the third mishap to RCAF planes in lower Mainland and Vancouver Island areas since Friday, and brought to 22 the number of RCAF personnel missing in this area." One last disappearance is explained in this December 4, 1944 article in the Times Colonist, "Fog and rain today prevented an aerial search for an RCAF Canso flying boat with a crew of nine which has been missing since Saturday (12/2) night in the vicinity of Victoria from Patricia Air Base," yes, the same base that Leslie Heal was assigned.

The search for Leslie was compromised because of heavy rain and wet condition. Searchers had gone from the mountains and had searched all the way towards the western coast of the island. This November 16 article in the Lethbridge Herald had this statement from searchers, "Belief that LAC Leslie Heal, 26-year old airman stationed at Patricia Bay perished in a little-known canyon on Lens Creek, said to be 1700 feet deep was put forward Wednesday. Bill Palliser said on his return

to Victoria that searchers had followed footprints (footprints or boot tracks?) and broken twigs which they were satisfied were those of Heal to the edge of the canyon." There were other articles that stated that these men had to climb cli s hundreds of feet high to remove themselves from the canyon. They were under the belief that Heal died climbing out and that he'd probably never be found. It was not long after this that the search was terminated.

There were many searches for Leslie over the following years and nothing was ever found.

It's hard to believe that identifiable remains would be found after 25 years, but it happened. The police were called to a hillside near Dymple Lake by a logging companies tree planting crew. They found a watch, whistle, gumboots, service rifle and a signet ring with the initials "LH" were located. The area had been logged years earlier, and the slash had been burned the previous year. The fire charred the butt of the rifle. Leslie's brother, Victor of Saanich made a positive identification from the property that was recovered. This April 12, 1969 article in the Times Colonist had these interesting details about the location and initial search, "Saanich Police Sergeant William Stephenson was in the air force with Heal and recalled being one of the searchers climbing arm's length apart up that unnamed forested hill where the hunters sep-arated. The weather was cold, wet, miserable he remembers, but three-quarters of the squadron was out there." As it turned out, Leslie was located far from Lens Creek, as was noted in an earlier article. The question remains, what tracks had searchers found at that location?

When you start to string together the coincidences in this case with Kenneth Duncan, missing air force planes, missing RCAF member, both hunters not located for years and each located in an area previously searched, proximity to each other, weather problems, etc., it starts to be overwhelming. The number of people missing in southwest British Columbia and northwest Washington are some of the most significant clusters I've documented.

Frank Johnson

Missing: 09/06/45, Manson Creek, BC

Age at disappearance: 65 Weather« Canines

This is far and away the most unusual story about someone that would not be considered a traditional hunter. This man had an a inity for bears, specifically Grizzlies. He either loved or hated the predators, I'm not sure which. The story starts in one of the most remote parts of North America, the headwaters of a creek with the same name as a notorious killer.

In the early 1940s, Frank

Johnson was a loner, prospector, miner, trapper, and hunter. He had come to Canada from Sweden 59 years ago and had been living in northern British Columbia for the last 18 years. The prospector had three relatives that all lived in one home at 1542 West Sixty-Third Street in Vancouver, Norma Johnson and Rose Baillie were nieces, and E.A. Johnson, his sister in law. The women said he was reasonably wealthy, didn't spend money and he had securities and cash in several British Columbia banks.

Johnson traveled with his Doberman Pinscher, a dog that was given to him by Norma Johnson. After thinking through this man's travails, it might have been that dog that kept him alive. He was known to spend many months in the woods alone with the canine prospecting, mining or trapping, all with the intent of making money.

Frank was supposed to be out of the woods on September 6, 1945, when he didn't come out, a group of friends went to one of his cabins to check on him. Searchers found that nobody had been there for weeks, his buddies got concerned and contacted the local RCMP. It wasn't until October 3 that notification got out of the mountains and made it into a city to report the disappearance. At this point, nobody knew where Johnson was, what may have happened or if he was even alive. Friends reaching out to law enforcement started one of the most extensive searches I've ever documented.

Constable B.E. Munkley and Game Warden Philip Brown left Fort St. John and first went to the cabin his friends knew Johnson had utilized, they found nothing, and it appeared Johnson had not been there in weeks. By the time searchers got into the woods, the prospector had been out for the majority of the summer, and they had no idea where he might be, but they did have a list and map of cabins that he owned and used. The constables stated they had been deluged with constant rain and cold temperatures for their majority of time in the mountains and usually crawled into their sleeping bags wet. They knew the hunter had owned over a dozen cabins along Manson and Germansen Creeks, an area heavily infested with Grizzlies, per the

constables.

This October 18,1945, edition of The Province had these details on the search, “In a 150-mile search through mountains “swarming with Grizzlies” Constable B.E. Munkley and Game Warden Phil Brown failed to find any trace of Johnson, who has been missing since September 6.” In the same article was this, “Frank Johnson, 65, the veteran hunter who had bagged more than 37 Grizzlies, may have himself been killed by bears. Discovery of an ax and the body of a starved pack dog have led police to believe that bears had killed the elderly man.” I liked the wording in that article and how Johnson was described as “elderly,” he was quite a way from slow and old. The same article stated they found his dog and equipment near timberline at the headwaters of Manson Creek. Law enforcement said that they believed that he left to go hunting, but never returned. There was no evidence to show a bear killed him, it was mere conjecture.

Johnson’s dog was found starving in the cabin with porcupine quills in its nose. The RCMP shot the dog to put it out of its misery. This may seem like a cruel act, but considering the remote location, it’s understandable.

There was another article describing Johnson’s hunting prowess in the October 19, 1945 edition of The Province, “The trapper had 36 Grizzlies to his credit and would “rather hunt bear than eat.” It was his habit to kill animals and leave their carcasses near his cabin to attract a bear.”

I have a good friend that owns a fishing lodge in the Yukon Territory and many times when I’ve been there the conversation will turn to Grizzlies. He has told me that they are not an animal to play games with, they are dangerous, fast and you can’t predict what they will do. He has told me that any time they arrive onto his property and are lingering near guests or cabins, he has to shoot them to protect his customers.

It’s hard to tell from these articles if Frank Johnson loved or hat- . ed bears. When you are prospecting, many times your head is down in the dirt and your backside is open and susceptible to attack. He might have learned at an early age that he couldn’t allow Grizzlies to loiter near his work for fear of attack.

Johnson’s relatives in Vancouver stated that they never believed he would leave his dog to starve, they thought something fatal must’ve taken his life.

If there was one photo that would encompass the life of Frank Johnson, it's the one I included in this article. The two-week search of 150 miles and the checking on a dozen cabins failed to produce Frank's body, and he was never found.

Wallace Marr

Missing: 11/19/62, Yale, BC

Age at disappearance: 30 years

Weather* Point of Separation

There are dozens of people missing in the Cascade Range of mountains in the United States. If you continued that range north into Canada thirty-five miles, that's where this disappearance happened, five miles north of Yale, British Columbia.

Wallace Marr was an avid outdoorsman and hunter that lived in Calgary, Alberta Canada. In November of 1962, he made the 450- mile drive from Calgary, Alberta to Yale, British Columbia. He then drove five miles northwest to his hunting camp where he met his friend Fred Bascoe. The pair would be hunting very thick forests and steep land.

On November 19, 1962, Fred and Wallace had hunted and were getting cold. They started a small fire on a logging road and rested until Fred saw deer tracks entering the woods. He told Wallace he'd follow the path to see if he could find the animal. Wallace said he'd stay by the fire.

Fred eventually made his way down the mountain to the main road and then back up to the hunting camp. He waited for several hours, checked the logging road, didn't find his friend and then went back to camp, Wallace never arrived. It was at this point that the RCMP was notified. The SAR commanders contacted all hunters in the area and advised them of the situation and requested assistance. Seven hunters joined police and SAR o icials in combing the mountain for the thirty-year-old hunter. This November 23,1962 article in the Nanaimo Daily News had these details, "They said Thursday the lightly clad Marr is missing in an area 120 road miles from Vancouver, where snow, rain, and fog and low temperatures have been prevalent since the weekend."

The RCMP put forth two theories over five days about what may have happened to Wallace. The number one theory was that he fell into a river and drowned. Theory number two was that he fell o a cli and

died. They never answered the question about why they couldn't locate tracks in the forest or why they never found a body or equipment. They never stated that he possibly died of hypothermia even though temperatures were below freezing.

It's amazing how many times hikers and hunters separate, and something happens, and the individual vanishes. I have had several readers tell me that it appears that someone or something is watching these people, waits for the appropriate time, moves in when nobody is watching and takes these victims, leaving behind nothing.

The six-day SAR for Wallace located nothing. He was never found.

Wally Finnigan

Missing 11/04/89, Creston, BC Age at disappearance: 51 years Point of Separation* Disability/ Illness* Canines

The location of this incident is unique, and it could almost be considered in the United States. Creston, British Columbia is located just five miles north of the Idaho border and 300 miles east of Vancouver. This is a very rural area with significant wildlife.

Wally Finnigan was a longshoreman living in Surrey, a suburb of Vancouver, BC. In November of 1989, he was a family man with children who enjoyed the outdoors. In the early days of November, Wally had not been feeling well. He had complained to his wife about chest pains but had minimized it knowing he had a hunting trip planned. The longshoreman had taken a few days o of work and drove his vehicle with his friend, Andy Wolfan three hundred miles east to Creston, BC. The pair was going elk and deer hunting in the mountains high above the city.

On November 4, 1989, Wally and Andy were hunting an area nine miles north of Creston, east of Duck Lake and south of Kianuko Provincial Park. The pair talked about their plans, they split up at Wally's truck and agreed to meet back in the afternoon, Wally was never seen again.

When Andy returned to the truck, he waited for Wally, called for his friend and hiked the trails looking for signs he might be injured. There were no indications that Wally was in the area. Andy drove into Creston and got the assistance of local police.

The local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) mounted a search that included forty people to look for the Surrey resident. The formal search lasted six days and located nothing. The family did get a note from a psychic that was addressed in the November 10, 1989 edition of the Vancouver Sun, "Finnigan said the family was contacted by a psychic, who believes he fell down a mine shaft but is still alive." RCMP o icials searched all possible mines in the area and found nothing. Wally's wife and five children did participate in the search in addition to locals and police. One longshoreman took his camper to the scene and fed searchers.

There was a strange report from Creston Police. After posters were put up in the community of Wally, a resident came to the police and stated that they had seen Wally walking down the road dragging his feet as though he was intoxicated. Nobody knew if the sighting could've been the hunter, but it was a sighting that had to be followed up by police. They never could locate that man.

The RCMP stated that they had brought their canines to the scene in

an attempt to pick up Wally's scent. A December 11, 1989 article in the Vancouver Sun had these details, "Finnigan (wife) said tracking dogs followed her husband's scent along the road where he was last seen by the witness all the way to the main highway."

Tn late June of 1990, the RCMP and family members of Wally's made one last push to find his remains. As they were searching the mountainside where he was hunting, they found something of note, as is described in the July 7, 1990 edition of the Vancouver Sun, "Two weeks ago during a final search by RCMP of the area, police found Finnigan's clothes, hunting rifle and wallet containing his identification." A few bones were found in the area, but it was never confirmed who they may belong to, or even if they were human. Later in the same article was this, "Although she believes her husband may have fallen down a cli and died, legally her husband still hasn't been declared dead." The coroner did state that the clothes appeared to be chewed on by animals, they never stated if this was post-death or the cause of Wally's demise. This is another case where searchers don't find a victim at the time they disappear. It's only after the family pushes the issue is there any resolution. It's also an interesting note that the RCMP canines were not even close to finding the victim; he was nowhere near the road where they supposedly picked up his scent. The sighting of someone looking like Wally in Creston was also incorrect. Lastly, the psychic who stated Wally was in a mine, they were also incorrect.

Raymond Krieger

Missing: 08/28/92- 9:00 p.m., Fort Nelson, BC

Age at disappearance: 48 years

Canines* Disability/ Illness* Point of Separation* German

Several years ago, I started to track locations where people lived or were raised versus where they disappeared. The first time I was made aware of this issue involved the disappearance of two physical therapists from Alaska. Through a series of odd coincidences, I determined that they were raised in a di erent state close to one another (See Missing 411- O the Grid). Since that first connection, I have been trying to determine where others lived and where they vanished. In this case, there are a few parallels that related to other missing hunters.

Earlier in this chapter, I documented two cases of hunters that

disappeared on Vancouver Island, now you can add another. In August of 1992, Raymond Krieger was a 48-year-old man living in Parkville on Vancouver Island, just thirty miles from Cowichan Lake. In earlier years, Raymond had owned a logging company in Fort Nelson, BC in far northeastern British Columbia and later moved to Vancouver Island.

Raymond loved the outdoors and hunting. In mid-August of 1992, he joined friends by flying to Fort Nelson, visiting friends for a few days and then traveling to Tuchodi Lakes southwest of Fort Nelson. The group then rode by horseback seven hours into their remote hunting camp. This area has been described in travel journals as some of the most remote regions anywhere in British Columbia. I encourage you to go online and look at photos of the lakes; they are gorgeous.

On August 28, 1992, everyone in Raymond's camp went to bed at approximately 9:00 p.m. They woke at 6:00 a.m. and Raymond was gone. His friends searched the area and determined that no horses were missing and the following details were released in the September 11, 1992 edition of the Nanaimo Daily Free Press, "Although they scoured the area where Mr. Krieger disappeared, there were no clothes or tracks that would point to his whereabouts." Remember, this was a group of very experienced hunters and woodsmen, how could there be no tracks?

One of Raymond's friends made the long ride out of the wilderness to notify authorities of the disappearance. RCMP had people on site within two days as is described in this September 1,1992 article in the Nanaimo Daily News, "The search for him began over the weekend, Monday, a search and rescue team was accompanied by two police dogs, their handlers and a regular RCMP o icer."

Once the RCMP arrived at the hunting camp, they started to question other hunters to attempt to understand what happened. Lorne Scott was one of the authorities on the scene and made this statement in the September 4, 1992 edition of the Vancouver Sun, "Scott said that Krieger's companions reported that he appeared to become disoriented and delirious the day before he disappeared." Raymond's condition was further described in the September 11, 1992 edition of the Nanaimo Daily Free Press, "We know he was in a confused state of mind," said Scott. "Something happened that reduced his capacity to think normally." He did not know the cause of the man's condition."

RCMP canine units, other hunters in the region and friends of Raymond went into the forest looking for the man. They fired o round

to attract his attention, and they called out his name, they never got a response. They never found any tracks and the dogs never keyed on a scent. The search lasted one week, and nothing was located to indicate where the hunter may have gone.

The symptom of being disoriented would cause readers to think that Raymond may have had a stroke or some other debilitating medical condition, if this were the case, the reality of him traveling far would not be reasonable and he should've been found. I have written dozens of examples of people in the wilderness where they suddenly feel ill; they become separated from their group somehow, it's at that point that they disappear. In this instance, Raymond went to his tent, and nobody saw him again.

There are always high risks associated with going deep into the wilderness. Tuchodi Lakes is a very remote area with extreme di iculty in getting to hunting locations. This di iculty can be a significant factor in obtaining medical care and searchers to the scene; thus the reason the RCMP were only able to send three o icers and two canines into camp.

Raymond Krieger was of German heritage, he was never found.

Tom Leonard

Missing: 10/02/2005, Spatsizi Provincial Park, BC Age at disappearance: 40 years Weather»

Spatsizi Plateau Provincial Park is the location of this incident and is one of the more remote places in British Columbia. . It is located in

the far northwestern section of the province. Here is what the BC Parks Department states about their property: “Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park is one of Canada’s largest and most significant parks. True wilderness

atmosphere, outstanding scenery and varied terrain make this park an excellent place for quality hiking, photography, and nature study. Lands within the park have an excellent capability for supporting large populations of wildlife.”

This park is noted for big game and lots of bears. The terrain is steep, di icult with outstanding wildlife viewing.

Tom Leonard loved the outdoors and knew the risks of wilderness travel. He applied and received a limited-access sheep hunting permit for the fall. On September 11, 2005, Tom drove his truck to the Eaglenest trailhead, parked, and put his backpack, tent, food for three weeks, sleeping bag, and other supplies in his pack. He had a large and heavy pack and left for his three-week expedition to the high altitudes associated with sheep.

On October 2, Tom was scheduled to leave the park and contact his family. He never did. The wife contacted the parks department and notified them of an overdue hunter. They found Tom’s truck exactly where he had parked it, and it appeared as though it had been there for three weeks. A search was immediately started.

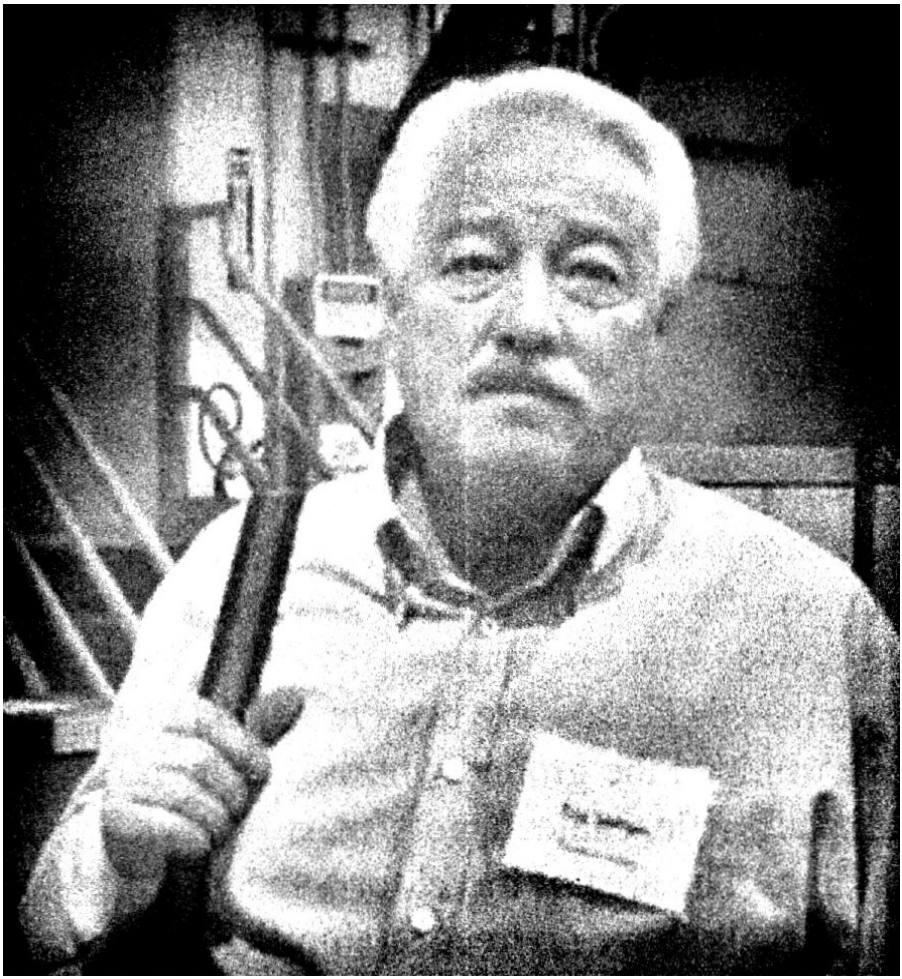
SAR workers found one campsite that they thought might be something Tom had used. Under a rock at the site, they found a granola bar wrapper they thought might be his. On October 8 bad weather moved into the area, and the search had to be terminated. Local authorities put posters up and tried to contact hikers and other hunters. Nobody saw the man.

In June 2006, Tom’s family mounted another search to find his remains. Again, poor weather moved in, and after a short time they had to terminate their e ort. In July 2006 the RCMP mounted a five-day air search of the area of the park they believed he’d hunt. They found nothing. In 2007 the family went back and searched the Waterfall Trail area. They again found nothing. In July 2008 there was another search of the Cartmel area. They found nothing.

The number of times that weather stopped a search e ort is notable. What is even more surprising is that it’s been over ten years since Tom vanished. There have been hundreds of hikers and hunters that have

tromped the ground where Tom traveled. Nobody has found a backpack, rifle, canteen, pots, pans—nothing. Where can all of this be hiding? The area of travel for a sheep hunter is at the high elevations that really have no trees or significant ground cover.

There is another story of a missing sheep hunter in the Alberta section. What's even stranger about the two sheep hunter disappearances is that they vanished within twenty days of each other, and they are back-to-back on the missing hunter list at the back of the book. They are the only two hunters who made the list for 2005. Is that a coincidence?



Raymond Salmen

Missing: 05/28/2013, Harrison Lake, BC

Age at disappearance: 65 years

Water* Canines* Missing Clothes/ Shoes*

This will be recognized by longtime readers as an unusual case. I have stated that I will not include stories in the books that deal with the possibility of drowning. I probably would've excluded this story early in the study, but not now. Canadian o icials state they believe that Raymond drowned. I don't think so.

Raymond Salmen was an experienced outdoorsman, camper, and hunter. He left his home with his two dogs and told his wife he'd be

camping at Harrison Lake and he'd be back in two weeks. He was going to be spending time in the outdoors, a place he loved. He drove his pickup with a camper to an area west of the lake where there are no established campgrounds. Nothing was heard or seen of Raymond after May 28. There was no cell-phone reception in the area.

On June 9, Agassiz RCMP responded to the area of Raymond's camper on the report of shots fired. O icers found Raymond's camper with his two dogs inside, but no Raymond. They started an intensive search of the area. RCMP called for search reinforcements in an area known as the "48 kilometer mark." Several search groups from throughout British Columbia responded and started a grid search of the area around the camper.

Four days after the initial call of shots fired, an unusual discovery was made, as is described in the June 18, 2013, edition of The Province: "On Thursday, just after 3:00 p.m., crews on board an RCMP chopper spotted balloons about 400 meters north of the abandoned campsite at a secluded beach. Police then uncovered what's believed to be Salmen's clothing, as well as a rifle and spent casings nearby." What they found exactly was the man's backpack in the bush, his shoes, socks, rifle, and shell casings on a small beach. His knife and belt were not found (although there is no absolute proof he had them).

The RCMP believed that Raymond had gotten down to the beach, gotten stuck, and started shooting to draw attention. If he did shoot his rifle, he hit parked cars, and this was reported. The RCMP stated that they think he ditched almost everything he owned and then tried to swim across the lake and drowned, at night. They did put divers into the lake and found nothing. Raymond's wife hired a recovery team with a robotic camera that had recovered over ninety bodies. The recovery team covered every inch of the lake bottom and found nothing.

Raymond's brothers don't believe the RCMP's theory. They think it's possible that Ray ran into foul play. They stated that he had seen odd things out in this area on past trips.

If Raymond were well enough to get down to the beach, why wouldn't he be in good enough condition to get himself out? There is one huge wild card in this mystery. Raymond wouldn't go anywhere without his dogs, and they were found locked in the camper. A June 12, 2013, article on CTV.com had this: "Tt's all these mysteries. My mind keeps thinking what could have possibly happened that he would go without the dogs,' his wife Daniela Salmen told CTV News." My question: what

if the dogs refused to leave the camper? Raymond obviously went looking for something dangerous and went prepared. He had his backpack and supplies and took his rifle with extra ammunition. He got to the beach, and something deadly confronted him—otherwise, why would he be shooting at cars trying to attract attention?

Summary

The RCMP believes that Raymond drowned. The o icers' dive team searched the area, and this was followed up by a specialist in recovering bodies. Nothing was found.

The RCMP wants to close the case and ignore all other outside possibilities. There is a reason that Raymond didn't have the dogs with him. Remember, canines play a role in many of the disappearances I've chronicled. I don't believe that Raymond would strip his clothing, shoes, and rifle and leave them behind as he swam. If there were a choice, he would've waited for daylight and then shot rounds to draw attention. I don't think he believed he had that choice.

Update In the winter of 2016, a man who worked for search-and-rescue in British Columbia and had been assigned the Raymond Salmen case contacted me. He said there were several highly unusual things that happened while he was there. He first stated that when he arrived with a group of other searchers, they saw a RCMP SWAT team walking out of the woods and getting ready to leave. I asked him why they would be there. He said they were told that the victim had apparently shot at something in the area the previous night, and they were there to ensure it was safe.

Thinking this through doesn't make sense. They found the victim's rifle. All indications suggest that Raymond was trying to get people's attention for some reason, not trying to kill anyone.

The SAR worker also stated that if a SWAT team had already searched the area and ensured the region was safe and nobody was in the grid area, why would a SAR team go back in where they'd just been? As it turned out, the SAR worker stated that they had them confined in a small area near the campsite and vehicle; they never went into the woods or searched a two-mile radius where statistics say the victim would be found. This person also said that there have been many unusual disappearances around this lake.

I appreciated the SAR volunteer reaching out and supplying the fascinating information.

Manitoba

Missing Person Date Missing» Age* Sex

Alex Thorne 10/04/58* 44*M

Alex Thorne

Missing: 10/04/58, Wanless, MB

Age at disappearance: 44 years

Water* Point of Separation* Canines

Wanless, Manitoba, is approximately five hundred miles northwest of Winnipeg and ten miles from the Saskatoon border. This small city sits between Grass River/Wekuso Falls Provincial Park, Clearwater Lake Provincial Park, and Rocky Lake Provincial Park. The region is thick with wet and swampy ground and hundreds of small lakes.

The missing person in this case, Alex Thorne, was identified in archives with two di erent first names, Alex and Alec. For ease of documenting this incident, I will call him Alex.

Alex lived on the outskirts of Wanless with his wife and eight children in a small home. Alex was a trapper by trade and was able to support his family through his ability to live o the land. On October 4, 1958, in the morning hours, Alex grabbed his .22- caliber rifle and told his wife he was going out to check his traps, and he'd be back in a half hour. In my years of writing about missing people and trappers, going out only that short of distance to check trap lines really doesn't sound realistic; it is normally an all-day or several-day trip. Whatever the case, Alex didn't return, and his wife told the kids to start the search. Two days later, the family gave up their search and notified law enforcement.

The RCMP responded with canines, helicopters, and ground searchers. Dogs couldn't find a scent, and the helicopters found nothing from the air. Special canines were transported from Dauphin; they also failed to find Alex. Alex's father-in-law knew of an Amactek First Nations Indian that was a specialist in finding missing people. A call was made to Louis Prince, and he responded to the Thorne residence. Reporters watched as Louis sat on a blanket on the floor of the Thorne residence.

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Alex Thorne 10/04/58* 44*M

Alex Thorne

Missing: 10/04/58, Wanless, MB

Age at disappearance: 44 years

Water* Point of Separation* Canines

Wanless, Manitoba, is approximately five hundred miles northwest of Winnipeg and ten miles from the Saskatoon border. This small city sits between Grass River/Wekuso Falls Provincial Park, Clearwater Lake Provincial Park, and Rocky Lake Provincial Park. The region is thick with wet and swampy ground and hundreds of small lakes.

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Alex's father-in-law knew of an Amactek First Nations Indian that was a specialist in finding missing people. A call was made to Louis Prince, and he responded to the Thorne residence. Reporters watched as Louis sat on a blanket on the floor of the Thorne residence and drew figures in charcoal on the floor. Louis stated that Alex was across the railroad tracks northeast of the settlement and that an animal had killed him. RCMP sent dozens of searchers into the area and found nothing. Louis told them to go farther out into the bush in a southerly direction. The RCMP found nothing again.

It appears that reporters started to make a mockery of Louis's e orts even though he had never failed to find a missing person up to this point. An October 16 article in the Winnipeg Free Press explained the feeling of the family: "Mrs. Thorne has told her sons and daughters that there is to be no information given to the press at present. Whether this is Prince's instructions, is not known."

Summary I searched three years of archives on the Thorne case and could not find any articles declaring that Alex was found. I did find one article in November 1958 explaining that searchers were making one last attempt to find the body. They found nothing.

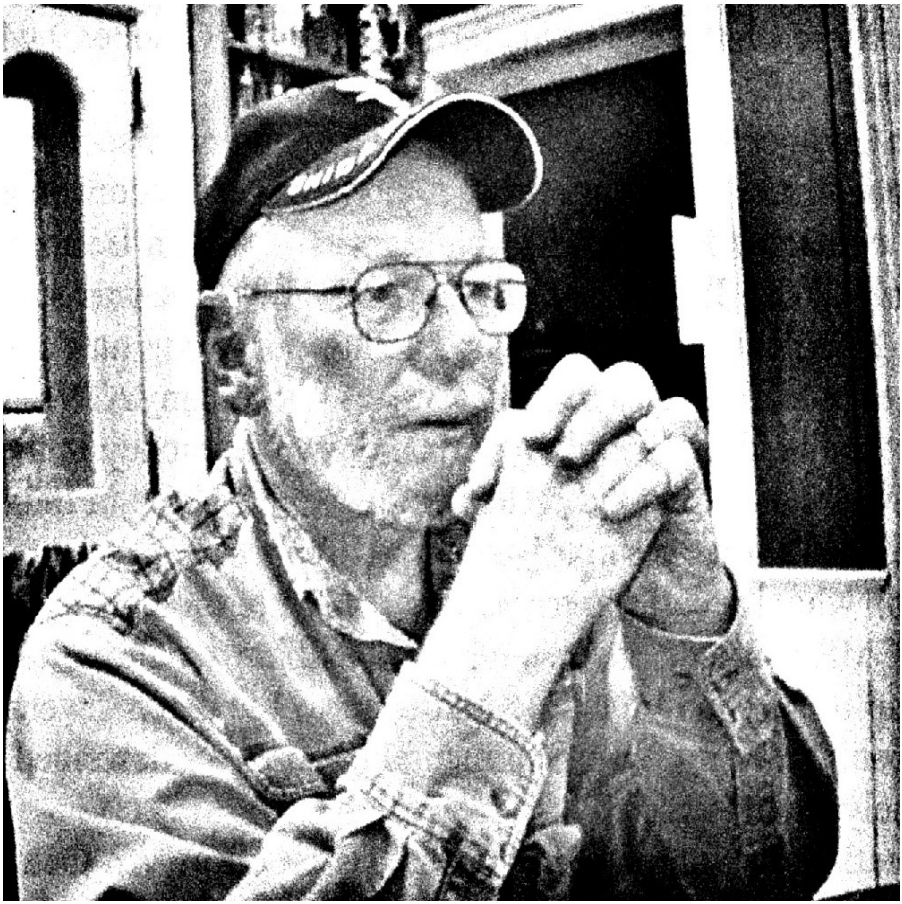
I do believe that if I were the Thornes, I would've tried just about anything to find my father. I probably would've tried Mr. Prince first, just because of his track record. I think it's interesting that he told the RCMP that Alex had been killed by an animal but failed to say what type. I find it doubtful that Alex was in the area where Louis stated to look, as a standard animal attack would've been a gruesome scene and one that canines would find. No locations were found that could be attributed to Alex or an animal attack.

The far north of Canada has consistently produced unusual disappearances. The great number of small lakes, ponds, swamps, and areas of vast desolation make this area very intriguing.

Newfoundland

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

William Oberkiser 10/09/2011« 65«M



William Oberkiser

Missing: 10/09/2011, Buchans, NL

Age at disappearance: 65 years Weather* Canines

Even people who think they are familiar with Canada probably are not keenly aware of Newfoundland. It is a relatively small island o the northeastern coast of Canada. If you look at a map, it's just northeast of Maine and Nova Scotia.

William Oberkiser was a seasoned and experienced hunter and outdoorsman. In 2009 he shot a world-record black bear in Newfoundland and had it recognized as such. He had made numerous trips there hunting moose and bear.

William was a retired American Power electric linesman that had been enjoying the good life. He lived on Big Turkey Lake in Indiana. He

loved the woods and forests, and the lake view gave him that constant reminder of the great outdoors. On October 5, 2011, William left his home en route for Canadian hunting. He drove his Ford F-150 pickup and took an eight-hour ferry ride to Newfoundland. He was seen driving his truck o the boat and toward his hunting camp. William had taken a few days to eventually reach the end of his ferry ride. It was October 9 when his truck drove o .

On October 9 and October 10, another hunter had seen William's abandoned truck on a remote road and began to be concerned. The hunter contacted RCMP. The vehicle was found on Bottom Brook Road o of the Trans-Canada Highway. The truck was stuck on a stump. RCMP stated that William had taken a wrong turn and drove for six to nine miles on a road that wasn't fit for many ATVs. The police got to the location and found that there was money in the truck, along with his hearing aids. They contacted his home in Indiana.

William's relatives confirmed that it appeared that he took two firearms when he left his truck, one being his shotgun. The family and RCMP couldn't understand why William would've taken the road the truck was found. He had been to the camp several times and wasn't su ering from any mental issue. They described him as extremely fit and smart.

Weather did inhibit some of the search e ort. An October 20, 2011, article in the Telegram had this information about the rescue attempt: "A cormorant helicopter from the 103 search and rescue squadron from 9 Wing Ganger is also helping with the search and will airlift the police dog unit into the area as soon as weather permits. The weeklong search for the 65-year old from Indiana has been scaled back earlier this week because no sign of him had been found."

Several canine units were taken to the scene. None of the dog units were able to find William. Numerous helicopter overflights in the area did not find him. There were two separate searches that started and stopped because of weather issues. In late October the final search was terminated, and nothing was found. William's son and daughter both got emergency passports to travel to Canada and made it to the scene to look for their dad.

It has now been many years, and William has not been found.

Northwest Territory

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Fred Van Du elen 12/17/78,4:00 a.m.* 26*M

Fred Van Du elen

Missing: 12/17/78, 4:00 a.m., Holman, NWT

Age at disappearance: 26 years

Point of Separation* Equipment Failure

Fred Du elen was raised in Ottawa and is the son of Frank and Freida Van Du elen. He had a brother named Michael, a photographer for the territorial government in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Yellowknife is one of those cities that you have to visit to truly understand it. There was a time in my life when I was working as the business development o icer for a technology company that was bringing cutting-edge technology to the diamond industry. I went to Yellowknife to meet with the general managers of the biggest diamond mines in Canada. Yes, Canada has some of the highest quality blood-free diamonds in the world. I can remember taking a large turboprop plane that was front-loaded with cargo. The area was frozen, cold, with few people on the streets. Summers in this area are known for great fishing and wildlife. Michael and Fred grew up with an appreciation of the outdoors and were taught how to hunt. Nobody would claim that Fred was an expert hunter, but his family stated that he knew how to handle himself in the extremes of the north.

Holman is a small community on Victoria Island in the Northwest Territory. Fred ran a small co-op handicraft store in the city of three hundred. At 4:00 a.m. on December 17, Fred left the town on his snowmobile carrying his .243 Magnum rifle for big game and a .22-caliber rifle for small emergencies. He had told others that he'd be gone for one night on a caribou hunt and be back the following afternoon. Dining this time of the year, this region only gets two hours of partial sunlight per day. It is mostly dark during the winter this far north.

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On December 19, the small community got concerned when Fred did not return. This wasn't the first time something like this happened to Fred. The RCMP told the press that Fred had gone out in months past and had his equipment fail only to be saved by the community and his friends that responded. Frank Van Du elen strongly disagreed with the police stating that Fred's snowmobile only broke down one other time and it was the community that found and saved him.

Without strong survival skills, nobody is going to live long outside without cover in this environment. It can regularly get down to minus

forty to minus sixty degrees.

The community and RCMP started the search to find the hunter almost immediately. He was headed fifty kilometers north to the hunting grounds. He specifically told a friend he was traveling ten miles northwest of Holman. He had a partner lined up to go with him who backed out at the last minute. A December 26, 1978, article in the Ottawa Citizen described the area: "'It is a well-traveled route, but it's treacherous in spots,' said Michael Van Du elen, Fred's 28-year old brother. 'There's everything from deep valleys to high cli s, so you've got to be careful.'" This exact area is 440 kilometers inside the Arctic Circle.

Search parties found Fred's camp thirty miles north of Holman and nowhere near the lake where he stated he was going. Searchers found his abandoned snowmobile, rifle, and survival gear. They found his sled held up by a piece of plywood, and it was apparent he had been sleeping under it. beneath it they located a foam mattress, sleeping bag, stove, and food. They even found a tea mug on a slight snow ledge. Fred had also brought along a second snow machine as backup. This was also found at the camp.

The RCMP flew their twin Otter aircraft for weeks looking for any sign of Fred. Local community members took long wood poles and penetrated the snow in the area, looking for a body.

There were many articles written a year after the disappearance calling this the "Arctic Mystery." There was no body. There was no explanation why Fred would leave the comfort and safety of his camp, knowing that the community would be looking for him.

Fred's family stated that he left the big city for the solitude of the great north. He loved the Inuit people and the freedom of movement o ered by Holman.

Some people may think that Fred was reckless. I think you need to understand the mind-set of the natives living in the area. When someone goes missing, there isn't anger or any question if you are going to search. Everyone able to search will search. Everyone knew to go. The area can be treacherous, and the Inuit people know they need to count on each other. Fred knew this. The RCMP made statements that were demeaning to Fred. They stated that he didn't follow village instructions to tell the RCMP o ice when he was leaving and going to return. Well, if you are traveling with others, you supposedly didn't have to. When Fred woke up that morning, he

believed his friend was going with him. At the last minute, the friend backed out.

The formal search for Fred was terminated on January 4. Villagers did go back to the area the following spring and didn't find his body. It is truly a mystery what happened to a well-supplied and safety minded hunter.

Nova Scotia

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Harris Hill 11/10/2010, l:00o.m.*87*

Harris Hill

Missing: 11/10/2010- 1:00 p.m., West Bay Rd, Parrsboro, NS

Age at disappearance: 87 years

Canines» Water»

In my years researching missing person cases, Nova Scotia has been on my radar on more than one occasion. Considering the population, 942,926, and the relatively small size of the province, many would think there wouldn't be places to get lost. Even though it is one of the smallest provinces based on geographical size in Canada, it has many, many thousands of acres of open land.

On November 10, 2010, eighty-seven-year-old Harris Hill had just finished his lunch at his home in Parrsboro. This is a small, rural city located near the Minas Basin, which is attached to the Bay of Fundy.

Harris enjoyed the outdoors and deer hunting. He had a deer hunting stand on West Bay Road just outside of Parrsboro. After finishing lunch, he drove his truck out toward his stand to deliver apples for the deer.

After a short drive, Harris stopped just o the road and made the three-hundred-yard walk to the stand. At this point something very unusual happened.

Late on the afternoon of November 10, friends and family members contacted authorities and notified them that Harris had not come back from his stand. The alarm went out, and this started a massive four-day search to find the hunter.

The RCMP took the lead on the SAR and subsequent investigation. It was established that Harris had made it to his stand. That was all that was confirmed. Nearly six hundred ground searchers combed the land around the deer stand for four days. The RCMP brought in multiple police canines to look for a scent and five di erent search-and-rescue teams also committed canines to search. The dogs found nothing. The Canadian Department of Natural Resources put two helicopters into the sky for the four days. They found nothing. A grand total of 7,500 hours of searching produced absolutely no results. The RCMP made statements that there was no foul play suspected in the disappearance of Harris.

The area around the deer stand was described as boggy. It was also stated that this area was not heavily hunted, and it was doubtful that anyone was in the area when Harris vanished.

Harris Hill was a World War II veteran. He had lived a very full life and was starting to enjoy the fun side of retirement. His health was described by family members as very good. If he would've had a heart attack or medical condition that put him on the ground, I believe that canines would have picked up the scent and led searchers to his body, this did not happen. If he would have stumbled into a swamp or boggy area, the helicopters with FLIR would have seen the body. The search for Harris started early in the evening of the day he vanished. Searchers were calling his name and listening for a response. They heard nothing.

A November 14, 2010, article on the CBC News website had these headlines: "Search for N. S. Hunter Called O ': words that no family wants to hear. The investigation into Harris's disappear-ance is ongoing, and there were other articles in 2011 stating that the RCMP

was still on the case.

Let’s hope that the family gets some type of closure on the case.

Ontario

Name Date Missing» Age» Sex

Eugene Loughlin 11/12/55,4:00 p.m.» 62»M

Meryl Newcombe 10/29/59» 50»M

George Weeden 10/29/59» 63»M

Elizabeth Kant 10/16/72» 45»F

Eugene Loughlin

Missing: 11/12/55, 4:00 p.m., Saint Pierre Lake, ON

Age at disappearance: 62 or 63 years Cluster Zone* Water* Point of Separation* Weather* Illness/ Disability

Over the years I have become very familiar with Ontario and its associated disappearances. This specific area of the province has hundreds of small lakes and ponds. As I have stated hundreds of times, water is one of the factors associated with many of the disappearances I've documented. I am not stating that water killed the people. Water was somehow involved.

I have also written about coincidences. It is quite a coincidence that the exact

area where Eugene Loughlin vanished is also a geographical cluster that was established through my research years ago. Aside from Eugene's case, there are three other individuals that have gone missing in this exact area. In looking at the area around this region, nothing about it appears di erent from the vast majority of the province.

Saint Pierre Lake, where this incident occurred, is twenty-five miles south of Renfrew and eighty miles north of Kingston, a region I have written about extensively.

In November 1955, Eugene Loughlin was a technical o icer for the Natural Research Council that was living in Ottawa. On November 9, Eugene left his Ottawa home and traveled with a group of friends to his hunting camp on Saint Pierre Lake. Eugene knew this area like the back of his hand. He had been traveling to arid hunting this exact area for over thirty years.

On November 12, Eugene left the camp at 10:00 a.m., telling his friends that he was going to hunt alone. He left camp wearing a bright red coat. At 4:00 p.m. he stopped by another camp at the lake and spoke to friends and then left there to resume hunting. As darkness started to fall, Eugene failed to return to his camp.

Eugene's friends started to search for the hunter the night he went missing. They went into the woods, called his name, but did not get a response. They decided to fire three rounds into the air as a signal. They received three rounds fired back. The friends moved toward the rifle shots and thought they got to the exact spot where they heard the

shots. The group again fired three rounds into the air and again got three rounds fired back. They again went to the area where they heard the shots and found nothing. They were befuddled and returned to their camp to get more help.

On November 13, provincial police in Renfrew got involved in the search. They attempted to get more resources into the area and were faced with a multitude of issues. The biggest problem was that thieves had stolen telephone wire that was strewn between the lake and Renfrew, and this made phone communication horrible. The other issue was freezing rain and bad weather inhibiting searchers.

On November 17, one hundred fifty tank and infantrymen from Canadian Armed Services at Camp Petawana came onto the scene and scoured the lake region. Boats were put on the lake and told to search the shore, these e orts proved fruitless.

Mrs. Loughlin was contacted in Ottawa and notified of the disappearance and asked for her insights. She stated that her husband rarely wandered far from camp. She did advise that Eugene wasn't feeling well when he left their home and was hoping he'd feel better before he arrived at the lake.

A November 17 article in the Ottawa Journal described some of the obstacles that searchers were facing: "Weather today continued bitterly cold with below freezing temperatures and strong blustery winds hampering the searchers. Planes and helicopters said to have been o ered by the RCAF rescue service at Trenton still cannot be called in even though the chances of their useful are slight."

The area that Eugene vanished was described by various hunters as wet, boggy, and a forested jungle. Late in the search e ort, some believed they found remnants of an old fire that was thought might have been used by Eugene. Many locals in the surrounding communities took time o of their jobs to help find the hunter.

After a lengthy and comprehensive search, the decision was made to terminate the SAR e ort. The loss of Eugene left friends and fellow hunters stunned. A man that owned and visited his hunting camp for over thirty years vanished. A man that never wandered far from camp seemingly disappeared, and the Canadian military and locals couldn't find a trace of him. This is the fourth disappearance from this geographical area that I've documented.

Disappearances occurring in the same geographical area may not

strike readers as something unusual. If you think of Ontario as the same size of Montana and Texas combined, you'll get an understanding of how big it is. In all of Ontario, we have identified just four geographical clusters of missing people with one of those just happening to be in the exact area where Eugene vanished. Is that a coincidence? Considering the vastness of the province, the coincidence factor seems pretty remote. There isn't a population center that can account for the disappearances around Saint Pierre Lake.

Do you want more of a geographical coincidence? A little over fifteen years after Eugene vanished, a child living at her family's rural residence just over two miles from Saint Pierre Lake vanished. There was a huge search; she was never found. I wrote about this case in Missing 411: North America and Beyond. The two disappearances were just miles apart—a critical point.

I have explained in the past that if disappearances happened one on top of the other with a small period of time between the cases, this would raise a red flag and make local newspaper headlines. If you spread the disappearances over fifteen to twenty-five years, police o icers and local o icials have retired, reporters forget about other similar cases in the area, and the community will probably never tie the cases together. This is the reason it is important to study history.

Something unusual is happening in this region of Ontario.

Meryl Newcombe

Missing: 10/29/59, Chapleau, ON

Age at disappearance: 50 years

Refer to the Weeden narrative below for details on Mr. Newcombe.

George Weeden

Missing: 10/29/59, Chapleau, ON Age at disappearance: 63 years
Point of Separation« Disability/ Illness

George Weeden and Meryl Newcombe were at a hunting camp that was owned and operated by the Newcombe family. They were moose hunting near the lodge when they failed to return from an outing on October 29; they were never seen again. They were last seen between mile

marker 106 and 107 of the CPR Line. The men were supposedly last seen at their camp on October 23. Workers on a passing train had seen the guys near the camp. Searchers also located two aboriginal trappers, Clem and Herb Nabigon, who had seen them later that same day in the same area. Meryl's wife reported the pair missing on October 29.

The Newcombe family camp was located on the north shore of Friendly Lake near Broughton Township at the Canadian Pacific mileage marker 107. This is located approximately 111 miles west of Chapleau. George Weeden was an individual that was never going to walk or hike long distances. In 1941 George had been seriously injured in a train accident, where he sustained a broken back and debilitating injuries to his right leg. It was also stated by family members that he had a bad heart.

One of the largest searches for the 1960s was conducted for these two men. There was a second search in the spring of 1960 after the snowmelt occurred, never finding one clue of what happened to the pair. There were over one hundred searchers scouring the bush and rivers for the men. They placed nets across rivers and dragged lakes. They found nothing. The search was suspended because of a bad storm.

Summary

The case of Weeden and Newcombe is highly unusual, very frustrating, and doesn't make much sense. The men were at a remote hunting camp owned by the Newcombe family. These were seasoned outdoorsmen who were not going to walk far from their vehicle; they were staying close to the truck and railroad tracks because of Weeden's injuries. Both men were undoubtedly armed because they were hunting. The men would not have been attacked by a bear; they were hibernating in late October. Both men were hunting in the Crown Game Preserve, known for its outstanding variety of birds and mammals. The Ojibwe First Nations Tribe lives in the middle of this area and knows the variety of game that it o ers. They have the ability to hunt the area at times when others cannot. The weather in this area would've been very cold, snowy, and di icult to walk in; you would never hike long distances at this time of the year in this area.

The law enforcement o icials conducted an extensive search in the spring after the pair disappeared and after the snow had melted and still could not locate the men. It may be plausible for one man to disappear in this region in late October. How two men could have disappeared ba les my common-sense approach to search-and-res- cue.

Theories about what happened to the hunters vary widely. Family member claim that the men were murdered. They don't have any evidence to support their claims other than the outdoor abilities of each hunter. Canadian police have never made the case a criminal investigation, and it is still classified as a case of missing people. The

trappers identified in this story believe Newcombe and Weeden fell into a river and died.

Elizabeth Ann Kant

Missing: 10/16/72, Adair Township, seventy-three miles east of Cochrane, ON Age at disappearance: 45 years Point of Separation

Ms. Kant was with a hunting party in a desolate area approximately seventy-three miles east of Cochrane, Ontario. During the hunt,

Elizabeth got separated from her party near camp 23 at Abitibi. This is an area near where the Abitibi River enters the lake and very close to Abitibi-De-Troyes Provincial Park. The point where the party got separated was approximately 2.4 miles south of camp 23. This was the last time anyone saw Elizabeth.

She was last seen wearing a brown short-sleeved sweater, green ski slacks, red-and-black hunting coat, and black rubber boots.

A large and lengthy search for Elizabeth failed to find her.

Quebec

Missing Person Date Missing* Age* Sex

Dominique Danis 11/23/47, 12:30 p.m.* 52*M

Jimmy Rambone Jr. 09/03/2003, 3:00 p.m.* 51 *M

Dominique Danis

Missing: 11/23/47, 12:30 p.m., Serpent Lake, QC

Age at disappearance: 52 years

Point of Separation* Water* Weather

According to articles, Serpent Lake is located approximately one hundred miles north of Hull, Quebec. Hull is located across the Ottawa River from Ottawa.

On November 23, 1947, at approximately 11:30 p.m., Dominique Danis was hunting the Serpent Lake area with his son Bruno. Bruno was a veteran of the Royal Canadian Air Force and had par-ticipated in World War II as an air gunner. The men decided to split up in the morning hours and meet again at 12:30 p.m., have lunch, and map plans for the afternoon.

At twelve thirty Bruno was the first to their car, and Dominique followed soon after. He told his son that he had spotted a large buck and wanted to go back immediately to track it. Bruno understood, and his dad went back into the forest.

Late in the afternoon, Bruno again came back to the car and waited for his dad. Dominique never arrived. Bruno waited for a few hours and then left to summon assistance.

The local RCMP got additional assistance from local villagers, who came to the search area and volunteered their time.

Searchers reported few leads. This Ottawa Journal article of November 27,1947, had these details: “Tracks had been discovered in the snow Wednesday [November 26] leading to a huge swamp near Yellow Lake about 100 miles northeast of Ottawa. In that areas there were no logging camps and only a few isolated shacks where Danis might take refuge.” There were no fires found in the area and nothing to show he may have camped. There was nothing else found in the region.

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On November 26, Bruno Danis was desperate to find his dad. It had been snowing lightly the last few days, and it appeared that the weather might be deteriorating. Bruno rented a private plane for two days and hoped to see either his dad or a fire from the sky. It was a valiant attempt by a son to find his father.

After five days of intensive searches, local game wardens and law enforcement o icials terminated the e ort to locate Dominique.

If you look at this area on Google Maps, you can see that the forest is extremely thick with foliage and swamps, creeks and ponds. At the time that the search for Dominique was terminated, local authorities believed that they would return the following spring and easily find his body. On May 6, 1948, o icials did return for two days and searched the area around Serpent Lake. O icials did not find anything of value.

I truly admire the way that Bruno handled the loss of his dad. He kept a level head, made the right choice in renting a plane and searching for his dad.

Jimmy Rambone Jr.

Missing: 9/03/2003, 3:00 p.m., Nunavik, QC

Age at disappearance: 51 years

Point of Separation* Disability/ Illness* Missing Clothing* Canines

Jimmy Rambone lived with his girlfriend, Pam Ruzzo, on his farm in Foster, Rhode Island. Jimmy had a variety of small animals that he cared for daily. He loved the outdoors and was a lifetime / hunter. His wish was to travel to the far reaches of northern Canada and pursue the hunt of a lifetime for caribou.

In early September 2003, Jimmy booked a trip with Canada Adventures to travel to Kuujjuaq, east of Kuujjuarapik in Nunavik, for an unguided caribou hunt. He was staying at a location called Camp Sardine near the Caniapiscau River and was transported to the site in a Beaver aircraft. There was a total of four hunters in the group at the camp. Jimmy was one of 3,500 hunters that annually come to Nunavik to hunt; this specific eight-day hunt cost Jimmy $2,900. Pam was going to stay at the farm and ensure the animals stayed healthy while Jimmy took the once-in-a-lifetime trip.

Jimmy wanted to hunt alone, and this wasn't unusual. He had decades of hunting experience, he knew what he was doing, and he was highly proficient with his rifle. Jimmy was also an epileptic.

On September 3,2003, the hunters rose early and departed their camp. It wasn't long after they left that they heard two shots that could have only come from Jimmy. The group felt that he must've quickly shot a caribou. The hunters came back to their cabin near lunchtime, and Jimmy didn't arrive. The group waited till near 2:00 p.m. and then started to search for the fifty-one-year-old hunter. At approximately 3:00 p.m., the sense of urgency started to rise as they found the location where Jimmy had apparently killed a caribou. The scene of the shooting was almost surreal. Jimmy's bright orange hunting vest was hanging thirty feet from the carcass along with his camera. Jimmy and his rifle were gone.

On September 4, more personnel arrived at the cabin and started to formulate a plan for the search for Jimmy. The Beaver aircraft went into the air and started to look for the missing hunter. It wouldn't be easy. Jimmy had been wearing a camouflage coat under his orange vest; it would make finding him di icult.

Searchers went back to the scene where the vest had been found and started to search the area for clues. There was snow on the ground, but rescuers could not find footprints leaving the area—very unusual. Jean-Pierre Bardou was the manager for Canada Adventures and was on the scene soon after the report came in. A September 19, 2003, article in the Nunatsiaq News had the following update on the search for Jimmy: "Soon the KPRF and the SQ and a specifically trained dog became involved in the search for the missing hunter. They scouted the terrain with the dog and surveyed low-lying trees, rocks and lakes by helicopter. 'There was no scent. The dog almost got lost,' said Bardou." Later in the same article: "'I fear something tragic happened to him the first day,' said Bardou."

A September 2007 article in Outdoor Life Magazine chronicled the disappearance of Jimmy. One portion of the article stated: “He simply disappeared from the face of the earth, or so it seems.” The article included the following statement by Pam Ruzzo: “Something’s just not right. You don’t just vanish.” I did speak with Pam by phone. She explained that she received donations and hired a private investigator to attempt to determine what happened to Jimmy. It is quite a di erent life this far north. Weather changes quickly, and the RCMP do not have the resources in this region that they would have in a more populated province.

The manager of Camp Sardine, Mr. Bardou, stated that they have only had one other incident where a group was lost for twenty-four hours. Once they put the Beaver aircraft into the sky, the hunters came into a clearing, and they were rescued. The camp had never had an incident like Jimmy’s.

Rescuers did tell Pam that there were occasionally predators in this region. The most vicious and dangerous animals are polar bears and wolves. They explained that these animals might possibly attack a human, but they’d also eat the carcass of the caribou, and they wouldn’t take the rifle, which was never found.

Summary

Several elements of Jimmy’s disappearance meet the criteria for missing people we would study. Jimmy was an epileptic. Some rescuers believed that it was possible that Jimmy had a seizure, became disoriented, and subsequently got lost and died. Pam did state that the hunter was sometimes disoriented after a seizure, but only for ten or fifteen minutes.

He was wearing very bright clothing, which was left behind. Leaving the camera at the scene seems like a very odd element. I have stated in other books that there does seem to be an inordinate amount of photographers that vanish.

Bloodhounds brought to the scene seemed disoriented or unable to work, a very consistent element in many disappearances.

The area where Jimmy disappeared is one of the marshiest areas you can find in North America. The region is probably 35 percent water and 65 percent land. Jimmy was very close to a river and a lake when the incident occurred.

Many people who are chronicled in the Missing 411 books seem to

shed clothing for some reason. The idea that Jimmy's vest was hanging in a tree when he knew there were hunters in the area seems contrary to his hunter-safety training.

The most important aspect of this case was the remote nature of this disappearance. Jimmy had no place to walk for safety; Camp Sardine was the lone safe location within hiking distance.

Searchers never did find a location where there were indications of an animal attack. They never found any confirmed tracks of Jimmy's. It's hard to reconcile how rescuers couldn't find tracks when there was snow on the ground. In a region where there is limited wildlife and virtually no human tra ic, it's very hard to understand how a search-trained canine cannot find a scent. This is a fling case that may never be resolved. Jimmy has never been found.

Yukon Territory

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

James Miller 09/22/74* 42* M

Bart Schleyer 09/14/2004* 49* M

James Miller

Missing: 09/22/74, Dendel Lake, Yukon Territory, Canada

Age at disappearance: 42 years

Weather* Canines

I think that any outdoorsman dreams of a trip of a lifetime to an exotic location to bag a giant fish, hunt for big game and deal with the conflicts that always surface on a trip o the grid. This is a story about a hunter that lived the dream, and nightmare.

Richboro Pennsylvania is a northern suburb of Philadelphia and the hometown for 42-year-old James Miller. He was an outdoorsman, husband to Dianne and dad to his three sons, Jim, Richard, and Je . His business was successful, and he was able to save money for a trip to the Yukon Territory in far northwestern Canada. James would not be traveling alone; he was going with his friend, Glen Bierman.

In mid-September of 1974, James and Glen made the lengthy trip with multiple flights to eventually arrive in the small city of Watson Lake,

Yukon Territory. Once they arrived, an outfitter had arranged for the pair to meet two guides and a cook for the excursion.

On September 15, the five men boarded a float plane and flew 145 miles to Dendel Lake where they made a temporary camp. They hunted for a few days and then traveled by horseback ten miles further north into the wilderness. They had directions that the plane would pick them up at Dendel on September 30.

By every account I could locate, James and Glen had the hunt of a lifetime. One man had shot a grizzly, both got a caribou, and they were last going for Bighorn sheep. They were hunting the La-Biche (Several di erent spellings) Mountains, noted for their height and ruggedness. Miller was on a mountain with the other guys, saw a sheep down the hillside 75 yards away, shot and killed it. The group

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The RCMP eventually got to the scene and dropped in two officers, a canine unit and support equipment. The search lasted for at least nine days. This October 8, 1974 article in the Edmonton Journal had additional details, “An RCMP spokesman said Monday that weather had prevented a helicopter from going into the area to pick up a tracking dog and its handler.”

I have been to the Yukon at least six times. I’ve flown the back-country in helicopters and float planes, some for business and other times for pleasure. I can tell you that the area is remote and not populated. Miller and Bierman were in some of the most desolate country in North America. If you have an emergency in this area, you are on your own for several days, more if there are weather issues.

On October 20, the RCMP announced that the search for Miller was over. The seasons were starting to change and with it the weather.

In early November, Diane Miller, James' wife flew to Watson Lake and met with the RCMP. She needed to see the location where her husband vanished and understand why the search was over. Police flew Mrs. Miller in a twin-engine Otter to the search area and adjacent mountain, and I can only guess that she was stunned at the vastness and lack of humanity. She returned to RCMP headquarters, thanked them for the diligence and commitment to finding her husband and returned to Pennsylvania.

This story has a factor to it that makes the disappearance challenging to understand. Even the story told directly by the guides on scene, they don't know how James got separated from three other people when he was hiking between them. People who don't read my work don't seem to understand how unusual the cases are and how unmistakably unusual the surrounding facts. I have no doubt the six-day delay in getting RCMP to the scene did not help in the search. The inoperable radio and weather played a significant role in this case.

Bart Schleyer

Missing: 09/14/2004, Reid Lakes, YT

Missing Clothing» Unknown Cause of Death» Water

Age at disappearance: 49 years

Missing- Removed Clothing» Bowhunter

If there ever was a man who would be considered an expert at bear management, it was Bart Schleyer. Bart was born in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1954. Due to the location of his birth and the fact that his father, a physician named Otis, was an avid hunter, Bart's life was destined to be lived outdoors. His father took him around the world on hunting adventures, and this had the boy hooked on the hunt, but not the kill.

Bart graduated in 1979 from Montana State University (MSU) with a master's degree in wildlife biology. He wrote his thesis on bear activity in Yellowstone National Park and attempted to understand how the bear reacted when confronted by humans. Bart later worked for the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study at MSU and learned live bear trapping skills. Later in life he became the world master of luring bears into traps. Many professionals stated that Bart knew more about bear behavior, tracking, and luring than anyone in the world.

Bart worked for a variety of groups after he graduated from college.

At one point he was employed by the Montana Fish and Game Department, where he would set bear trap lines in some of the toughest terrain in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Once the bears were trapped, Bart would install collars and follow the bears throughout the summer to study their behavior.

One of the many stories about Bart's athletic prowess tells of days he spent hiking the mountains, tracking and walking for some twelve hours—where there were no trails—before heading back to his cabin. Once home, Bart would start an exercise regimen of push-ups, squats (using logs he had crafted for the task), and a variety of other exercises that would cripple the average man. Remember, Bart was doing these exercises after a full day in the mountains!

He moved to Alaska for a short period and studied taxidermy while enjoying the Alaskan outdoors. For Bart's next adventure, he was recruited by a friend to travel to the Russian Far East to study and trap Siberian tigers. Bart was again the optimum expert for trapping, collaring, and studying the tigers. It was also in Russia that he developed a relationship with a beautiful Russian woman, Tatiana. Bart and Tatiana had a son, Artyom. This was the first time he had dedicated time to a relationship and family.

In 2002 Bart moved to the Yukon Territory and called Whitehorse home. He developed a keen interest in the Yukon wildlife and was specifically interested in bow hunting sheep and moose. As a hunter, Bart had conquered almost every continent and most big game with his bow. He felt it o ered a bigger challenge than hunting with a rifle. It should be clear to all readers that bow hunting is a skill that can take years to perfect. On September 14, 2004, Bart arranged for a floatplane to fly him to Reid Lakes. The lakes sit approximately 110 miles east of the Alaska border, 5 miles west of the Klondike Highway, and 10 miles south of McQuesten, Yukon. There are four major lakes in the Reid Lakes chain, with the largest being 1.25 miles long and about the same distance wide. The lakes are isolated from the highway by a river, and travelers cannot get to the lakes unless they fly in.

Bart's plane successfully landed at the largest of the Reid Lakes and dropped him and his gear on the shoreline. Bart not only took a tent and supplies but also an inflatable raft to meander around the lake.

I have spent many weeks in the Yukon and developed a few contacts. Warren Lafave is the owner of the Inconnu Lodge in the eastern side of the province. When I asked Warren for a provincial wildlife contact

to discuss the region around Reid Lakes, he sent me to Rick Fernel.

Rick spent twenty-five years as a wildlife biologist for the Yukon Territory before retiring in 2008. I asked Rick about the Reid Lakes area because I wanted to understand what type of wildlife and habitat it o ers. Rick immediately stated that he knew about the Bart Schleyer incident and could never understand why he'd gone to Reid Lakes. He said the fishing wasn't good at the lakes, and there wasn't much wildlife in the area. Rick made it clear that there were many other locations with better fishing and outstanding wildlife opportunities that put Reid Lakes to shame.

Bart had scheduled his floatplane to pick him up at Reid Lakes on September 28. The pilot arrived at the lake, pulled up to Bart's camp, and was confused by what he found.

Bart's tent was found knocked down, but the pilot was not sure by what. Near the tent, he found Bart's backpack with bear spray, along with his VHF radio and a knife. The pilot yelled for Bart but did not get a response. He imagined that if Bart had left, he would have taken his backpack and supplies. The pilot left the area and contacted RCMP, who later contacted friends.

The RCMP initially had a very limited role in the search for Bart. After he was reported missing, the RCMP did a flyby over Reid Lakes. That was it. Bart's friends arrived at the area and imme-diately went across the lake from his tent. Here they found his inflatable boat. Sixty feet inland from the boat, the team found a bag full of gear. Leaning next to the bag on an adjacent tree was Bart's bow and arrows. The bag of supplies had not been touched, and it was obvious to his friends that he had been sitting on it. They said it appeared as though Bart had been calling moose from the location, so they continued to scour the area. A short distance away, they found a camouflage facemask with a small amount of blood on it. They then decided to call the RCMP back to the scene.

On October 3, 2004, Yukon RCMP and conservation o icers went to Reid Lakes en masse and set a grid search pattern in an attempt to find Bart Schleyer. Sixty yards from the bow, searchers found a skull and a few teeth. They also found a pair of camouflage pants, a camera, and a few small bones. The teeth were later positively identified as Bart's. Most investigators would stop the investigation at this point and claim a grizzly killed the wildlife biologist. But there were too many strange circumstances to claim a grizzly had killed a man who lured grizzly bears for a living.

For starters, there was significant bear and wolf scat at the scene. Many samples of scat were recovered and sent to a lab for testing. One issue that completely ba led investigators: there was no clothing found in any of the bear scat. When bears eat people, they eat everything—clothing, jewelry, anything you are wearing goes in and eventually comes out. It was also odd that Bart's pants were lying on the ground near the scene, almost as though he had removed them, or they had somehow come o . Most of the clothing that Bart would have been wearing was never found, even after a wide and comprehensive search of the area.

Conservation o icers at the scene knew that bears usually cache their kills, burying them for a later meal. A thorough search of the Reid Lakes area didn't produce any evidence of a cache or any bloody ground from a body being dragged or wounded. The other troubling issue is that there was no sign of a struggle anywhere in the Reid Lakes camp where Bart was staying or near his bow. No moss, tundra, or branches were disturbed; it was a very calm site.

Several investigators made statements that his death is a mystery, and the idea that a bear killed him does not make any sense. People who worked with Bart all claimed that he would have gone down with a struggle. His friends said Bart was in outstanding shape and would have fought for his life. They do not believe a bear could have attacked Bart by surprise.

One of the last items that investigators found sixty yards from the bow was Bart's cap and a balaclava he was wearing. There was no damage to the cap or the balaclava, no blood, nothing to indicate something dreadful had happened. Investigators also found it very strange that Bart's balaclava was found with no punctures or bite marks in it, which is unusual because bears normally bite the head and neck. The coroner would later make a supporting statement that the skull did not have punctures or bite marks that would be associated with a bear attack.

Investigators find it di icult to believe that animals would have killed Bart and then left his bag completely undisturbed. Investigators also don't understand why a predator would kill and consume Bart and not travel the half mile to his camp to consume his food. Based on what they found at Bart's campsite, investigators believe that he had been alive at Reid Lakes just one night.

Coroner Sharon Hanley examined the minimal remains of Bart Schleyer and stated that, with no tissue to examine, it was di icult to

draw conclusions. The coroner also stated that the bones that were recovered had been “gnawed on by an animal.” She did not specify what type of animal.

I asked Rick Fernel to share his thoughts about the scene where Bart was found. He said if I were to ask him about the strangest case in almost thirty years in the Yukon, it would be the Bart Schleyer disappearance. Rick stated that in all his years in the Yukon, it was his expert belief that “bears don’t consume people up here.” He stated that the largest of the Reid Lakes is shallow, with lots of bugs. It’s a place where people don’t travel. He said it appeared that Bart had taken his inflatable boat across the lake to hunt. Maybe he heard or saw something, but it was obvious from the scene that he was sitting and calling moose when something terrible happened.

One of the last statements Rick made about the disappearance of Bart was regarding bears. He said it did appear that a bear had eaten a portion of Bart, but he didn’t believe it killed or consumed all of him because there was no clothing in the scat and his pants were found in the bush. Rick stated that if Yukon conservation o icers find any carnivorous bear in the area, they form a team to hunt and kill the bear. They never did this in Bart’s case, and there was never any follow-up. Rick’s closing statement on the Bert Schleyer case: “This was really, really an odd case.” There have been a few articles that stated that pieces of clothing were found in bear scat at the scene. That would be entirely incorrect. Rick Fernel was the chief investigator on the case, and I spoke to him at length. He has no idea why these statements were made or where they got their information, as it wasn’t in his lab reports.

Summary

Bart was a man that was very much in touch with the environment. He knew how to stalk and hunt game and how to attract, trap, and collar bears. The man even made his own bow and arrows with which he hunted—he was that in touch with nature. Everyone who made a statement about Bart called the man extremely humble, not your typical wildlife biologist.

Bart was sixty feet from the lake, sitting on a bag and calling for moose. He was keenly aware of every sound around the lakes. He felt he was not in any imminent danger, as his bow was found leaning against a tree (unless, of course, someone put that bow in that position after his death).

Bart was attacked and killed. His pants were o his body but not torn to shreds, although they did sustain some damage. The idea that Bart removed his own pants in an area known for significant bug activity and clouds of mosquitoes is quite doubtful. Whatever took Bart was very fast, very powerful, and had no interest in any of his food or tools. It does appear that something took Bart's clothes but left his pants. Something felt that Bart was a threat, but why?

Investigators believe that Bart had spent one complete night at his camp (based on the supplies used and garbage found at the scene). If Bart had been there one night, the odors that emanate from cooking would have been apparent miles away in a desolate region like Reid Lakes. It might have been these smells that brought Bart's predator to his location.

Bart Schleyer was the optimum man to be bow hunting in the Yukon Territory. If Bart Schleyer could become a victim, any of us could be a victim. A recurring theme in this book is that many of these stories have never had significant press coverage, and the vast majority of North Americans have never heard of these victims. I would hope that making the reader aware of the dangers that exist in the wilds of North America would elevate their senses and encourage them to take additional precautionary measures when enjoying the wild.

AUSTRALIA

I view Australia as our distant cousins. After spending six years investigating missing persons cases, they are one of almost a dozen countries for which I have documented missing persons cases. The countries in order with the most disappearances matching our profile: United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia.

This book is about hunters. We may think about hunting in the traditional sense: rifles, bow and arrows, heading into the bush to kill a large mammal. The following story centers in New South Wales, Australia, in 1898. I've never documented anything like what you will read below.

Byamee

In 1898 there was a sergeant employed by the New South Wales Police Mounted Unit named W. G. Noble. His job was to travel to out-of-the-way locations and keep the peace. One of his keys to survival was to make friends with aboriginal tribes and to keep up communication between his organization and their tribal activities. In

1899 Noble wrote an article titled “Hunter Vanished in a Storm.” This story was published again in the November 26,1949, edition of the Sydney Morning Herald.

Noble was riding in 115-degree heat and felt as though he was melting. He rode into an area of Lake Booroolilla to investigate, as he described, “the mysterious disappearance of dead wool during the devastating drought of 1898.” He was also in the area to investigate rustlers.

He stated that he was riding when “banks of heavy clouds loomed over the Belar and Coolibah Forests beyond the spinifex and Moorilia ridges, and there were ominous rolls of distant thunder.” Anyone who has read my books knows that bad weather is involved in many of the disappearances of people. Sometimes it appears just as the disappearance occurs; sometimes, just after.

Noble had fifteen miles to travel until he reached his destination. He decided to stop at an aboriginal camp to get cover. He described this location as the “pinewoods, on the shores of a stretch of waters known to the natives as Lake Booroolilla.”

The sergeant described a chaotic scene in the camp. Noble said the area was in extreme turmoil. Dogs were yelping; women were running and shouting; it looked like complete chaos. As soon as he dismounted his horse, he was waived over to a driver and told to take cover inside by the chief. It was large enough inside for him and his horse. Just as he escaped inside, the storm cut loose. Almost nonstop lightning, thunder, rain, hail, it seemed as though the weather gods had gotten angry and were unleashing the torrent on the small camp. I will now quote the sergeant’s article directly as the wording is important:

After some time, when I looked out for some sign of the storm abating. I saw to my amazement a towering old warrior with long grey hair and beard, striding towards the lake, on the shores of which he stood and gesticulated fiercely with his wizened arms. Then he began to chant in his deep booming voice as though challenging the elements to mortal combat. Even while I watched a blinding flash of lightning struck down. It left a dense vapor-like mist, which completely enveloped the warrior and hid him from view. After it lifted, I hurried over and was astounded to find that he had disappeared.

Later in the article was this: “The chief told me that the old warrior I had seen was a great hunter named, Byamee, the Mighty.” Just as Byamee vanished, the camp began a death chant. The sergeant

described the chant as “eerie and poignant that it haunted me.

The article ended. Fifty years later the sergeant added this: “Although half a century has rolled by, the death chant to which I listened in was undoubtedly voiced during a big storm by a Burrah Tribe of aborigines, which then inhabited the area around Angle-dool, Lightning Ridge, and the Narran River, and its lakes, along the Queensland border. We never found the body of the old man, and as a result the tribe was confirmed in its belief that he had been wafted o the Earth by unfriendly spirits.”

This is a fascinating firsthand account of something very unusual. The behavior of the village before the disappearance and its behavior after are truly unique. Aborigines from Australia, Native Americans from the United States, and First Nations People of Canada have beliefs and stories that have been carried for centuries. They each have lived in the wildest of locations of their respective areas. They have seen and experienced things that people in the city will never experience and may never comprehend. Many individuals refuse to even entertain the legends that these people carry. Here we have an educated white man from civilization that was able to view something rarely, if ever, seen by a city dweller. The event that was just described can add some light to what I’ve documented in five books. I have stated that many disappearances are related to water. Byamee vanished on the banks of a lake. I have also stated that bad weather is associated with disappearances. The warrior vanished during a horrific storm in the presence of others. The description of a mist that enveloped the area as Byamee disappeared almost seems like a magic trick seen in Las Vegas.

This is the closest incident I have ever found where someone described another disappearing in the bush. If you are new to this topic, you may brush this o as another bizarre story that is probably fictional. Because of the facts involved and the manner it evolved, I believe it. Australia and North America have facts associated with disappearances that are almost identical.

I’ve written about fifteen cases in Australia before this book. Those cases are documented in Missing 411: North America and Beyond and Missing 411: The Devil’s in the Detail. Many of the stories involve small children that disappear from a remote spot and are found phenomenal distances from the point last seen. These are distances that make the trip seem to many readers to be supernatural.

It is extremely rare in my research to document an incident when

someone related to law enforcement vanishes. It may be that the training and care that goes into their professional life carries over to their private life. It may also be that most in law enforcement need to have a high level of common sense, something that can save your life in a challenging environment. I realize that there must be dozens of stories of lost hunters in Australia; unfortunately I could not find them. I did find this story, which is riveting.

Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

Wurran 09/13/81* 3*F

David Prideaux 06/05/2011,4:30 p.m. • 50* M

Wurran

Missing: 09/13/81, Howard Island, NT

Age at disappearance: 3 years

Point of Separation* Water*

Howard Island is a small piece of land located at the far northeast comer of the Northern Territory. It is desolate, and from all accounts, people did not live there when this incident occurred. The island has a small airstrip. The island is approximately ten miles long and four miles wide. Its location is approximately one hundred miles east of Milingimbi in the Arafura Sea, two hundred fifty miles south of New Guinea.

On September 13,1981, natives local to the region were hunting the island when one of their daughters disappeared from their camp. The girl was three years old and went by the name of Wurran. Accounts di er on the age. Some say she was four years old.

The locals had one of their group leave and request assistance from the government. They received it. A September 19, 1981, article in The Age explained the e ort: “Police will maintain their search for a four-year-old girl missing for more than five days on Howard Island o the coast of Amhem Land. Chief Superintendent Neil Plumb said line searches on the ground and a helicopter would be kept going for another two days at least.” O icials had organized searchers and were walking the island in a line, shoulder to shoulder, looking for the young girl. Name Date Missing* Age* Sex

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The search continued for seven days without finding a trace of the girl. On September 22, the formal SAR was terminated without finding any indication of where the toddler might be. Over eighty people made their way to the island and participated in the SAR.

This is a di erent type of search scenario than what I have explained in the past. Searchers were concentrating on the land, meaning they didn’t believe she went into the water. The land is flat with bushes but no large trees. The total area to be searched would’ve been forty square miles, easily covered extensively by a helicopter.

As best I could determine, Wurran was never found. This is the only case of a missing person from a hunting camp on such a small island I

have ever found.

David Prideaux

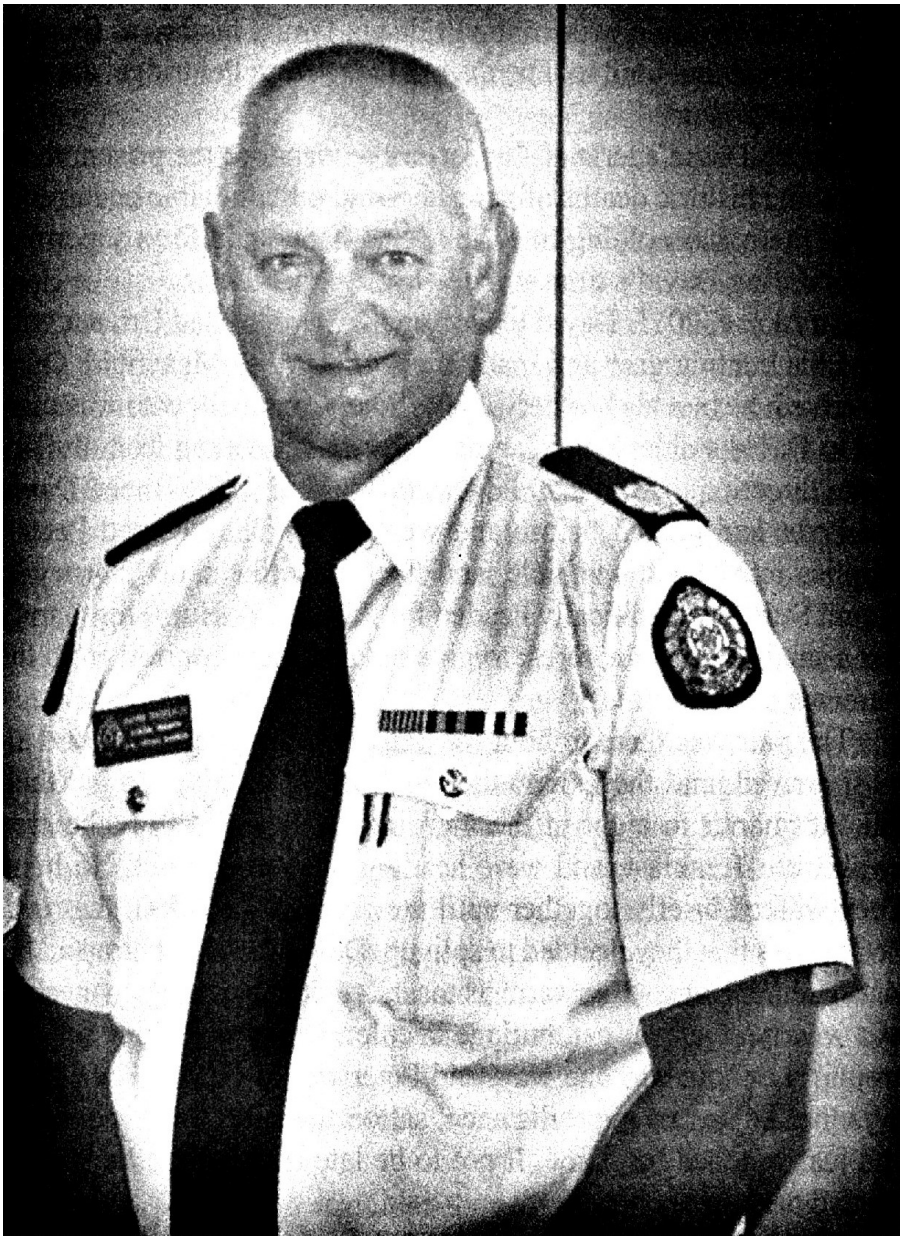
Missing: 06/05/2011, 4:30 p.m., Mount Stirling, VIC

Age at disappearance: 50 years

Point of Separation» Weather» Canines

The location of this incident is important. Mount Stirling is on the northeast fringe of Alpine National Park. It is approximately ten air miles from the largest lake in the area, Lake Eildon. Mount Stirling is an area extremely thick with brush. The mountain sits alongside Mount Buller to the west. David Prideaux was born October 7, 1960, into a large family (seven boys and two girls) and raised in eastern Melbourne. His dad was employed by the Toyota Corporation, and his mom worked night shifts at local companies in manufacturing. Peter was David's older brother, and when David was twenty-five, he was employed as a locksmith. Peter was the warden at HM Pentridge Prison. It was a foreboding place that had walls like an ancient castle. It was built in 1850 and was later known as one of Melbourne's supermax prisons. It was technically in Coburg but just north of Melbourne. This was a very tough prison for a newbie like David to step into. Pentridge was eventually closed on May 1, 1997.

By all accounts, correctional work seemed to work for David. He stayed inside the walls for over two decades, rising through the ranks of correctional o icers.



David Prideaux was married to Joanne, and they had two children. They had a residence on the west side of Melbourne.

In June 2011, David was now the warden at Barwon, one of the toughest prisons in Victoria. The prison sits southwest of Melbourne in Geelong, approximately twenty miles from Melbourne's west side. It was an ironic twist in the Prideaux family history as Barwon was designed and built to take the prisoners from Pentridge, another super

max prison.

During David's term as the general manager of the prison, there were some historic deaths of gangsters and other notable occurrences, but there was nothing truly abnormal happening for a supermax prison during David's time at the helm.

On June 4, 2011, David loaded up his Toyota Land Cruiser with all of his hunting gear and made the solo drive to Mansfield. Once he arrived, he met his brother-in-law, Peter Campbell, who was married to David's older sister Janine. Peter was traveling from the opposite direction, and Mansfield was the natural spot to meet. David and Peter had hunted before and were close. They loaded Peter's supplies into David's vehicle, and they made the short journey to Mount Stirling, specifically headed for Tomahawk Hut. This is truly just a small shed in the forest to give outdoorsmen comfort from the elements.

The pair was there to hunt for Sambar deer. The winter had almost arrived, and they knew they had just a few days to get their kill. At quarter to eight in the morning on June 5, 2011, the men awoke, ate breakfast, and were heading out into the bush to hunt. They walked briefly together until they came to a fork in the road. Peter states that they decided to split up. David looked at him and his last statement was, "I'm warm as toast," referring to the new gear he was wearing that was camouflage in color. David was going to walk around the mountain one way, and Peter would go the other. Peter says that he went a short distance, sat on the side of the mountain, and just watched for game. It got to be late in the morning, and he headed back to the hut.

Peter ate lunch and thought about going back out to hunt, but instead thought he'd stay at the hut and collect firewood for the night.

At 4:30 p.m., David was supposed to be back at the hut and didn't arrive. He was carrying matches, a GPS unit, his rifle, a small backpack, and a UHF radio. The guys had agreed to stay on channel 8, and Peter called on that channel. He did not get a response. He walked up the road slightly and still didn't hear anything resembling David. At 6:00 p.m. Peter stated he got really worried. David's Land Cruiser was locked, so he couldn't drive around and look. He took out his cell phone walked the trail and got one bar of service. He called David's cell and told him he better get back because he was worried. Peter didn't know then that David's cell phone was in the Land Cruiser.

As evening arrived, Peter called for assistance from Mansfield police. They arrived on scene at approximately 9:30 p.m. The o icer activated his lights and siren, hoping to attract David's attention, with no luck. The o icer then told Peter to fire o a few rounds of his rifle to see if that attracted David. Peter paused and asked the o icer if he wanted to inspect his gun, just in case later there was any theory that he may have shot David. The o icer said no, just fire the gun; he did. Up to this point, Peter hadn't fired his weapon on the trip. The pair even lit big fires in the hope it caught David's eye. Nothing seemed to work.

On June 6, rain and snow were falling in the area, and temperatures had dropped. SAR teams from Melbourne had arrived at the hut, and a police air unit from Melbourne flew the area when it could. It wasn't long before Tomahawk Hut turned into a huge command-and-control center for the e ort to save David Prideaux. In the following days, rain and snow continued to fall, and canine teams from the Victoria Corrections Bureau arrived, in addition to canine teams from the Victoria police. The canine teams never found a scent trail. In later weeks, one of the canine handlers made a statement that Prideaux wasn't on the mountain, or the dogs would've found him. I can't tell you how many times in past books that statement was proven false, or were they not on the mountain and arrived after the dogs left?

Dozens of ground searchers thought they might have found one boot mark David made and one receipt that came o his clothing. Nothing else was ever found.

By the time that the intensive five-day search was over, there was anywhere from two to three feet of snow on the ground.

Family and friends returned to this site in late June, September, October, and November of 2011. There have also been intermittent searches in years since. David's body, rifle, backpack, and clothing have never been located.

The Prideaux family has a split decision on what may have happened. Half the group believes that David had a medical event that took his life, and he's still somewhere on the mountain. The other half believes he was murdered for a reason associated with his job at the prison.

There was a huge investigation and inquest. The formal decision was that the government believes David lost his life to natural causes on the mountain.

Since the incident, the press has thrown multiple theories at the

incident. One theory says David had a heart attack or stroke and died on the mountain. This makes some sense except for the statement from the canine handler. Would his body be found if it was there? Another theory says he was shot by Peter accidentally, and then his body was dumped in another location. Peter loved David as a brother. He o ered to have his rifle inspected by the police. They refused. I suppose this is possible but highly improbable. I don't buy into this. A third theory says he was killed in retaliation for an event at .the prison, possibly killed in a gangland hit. Again, highly improbable. Gangs don't usually leave the comfort of their haunt. Thinking that some gang members could walk around in the mountains in a stealthy manner and kill David seems like a huge stretch, especially since Peter never claims to have heard a shot. A final theory claims David orchestrated his disappearance. This is the worst of all theories as he loved his family and knew he was on the downward stretch to a great retirement. The biggest question associated with this stupidity is, how would David get from the middle of nowhere back to humanity?

Readers of my past books know that the number of profile points in this story that match many in past books are there. The fact David disappeared without his cell phone is another fact that matches many disappearances. Remember the statement from the canine handler: again, a match and a statement I've heard many times in the past. The fact is that many, many bodies are found in an area that was previously searched dozens and sometimes hundreds of times.

David has been described as a very methodical, smart, and well-equipped man. It is extremely doubtful that he got lost and perished in the woods. He had a GPS unit, and he had a high degree of common sense.

AZERBAIJAN

This is going to be one of the more unusual stories you'll ever read about regarding hunters. The incident happened in the country that is now known as Azerbaijan. The specific location was a small island o the coast near Baku. Baku sits on the Caspian Sea approximately two hundred miles north of Tehran, Iran. Azerbaijan was under the Russian empire for eighty years until 1918 when the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was established. The republic existed for only two years when Russia again invaded and took over and maintained that control until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

This incident was reported in many newspapers in 1909, probably because of the unusual facts associated with the story. The facts that I

gleaned came from the February 12, 1909, copy of the Deseret News.

In early February 1909, three wealthy residents of Baku left and went by boat to a small o shore island to hunt. The group was supposed to be back on February 9 or 10, and they never arrived. On February 11, a group left Baku to check on the status of the hunting party.

The searchers arrived on the island to find the hunters' boat pulled far up the beach, just as it should've been. They started to walk the land just o the beach and soon found something that was shocking and bizarre. The article stated, "Lying close to each other were the bodies of the men they had come to seek. Each had his hands crossed over his breast as if reverently prepared for the tomb. Their faces were calm and composed." The article went on to say that there was no sign of a struggle, no bruising on the bodies, and the clothes were arranged on the bodies, as they should be. All of the personal possessions and valuables of the men were in possession of the victims. The description reminded me of a group of guys who had lain down on a hillside to get some sun and died on the spot, simultaneously.

As searchers started to scour the area for evidence and facts, they quickly realized that the only things missing from the victims were their rifles, pistols, and knives. There was a massive search of the island for these items and other evidence. They found nothing. The case got even stranger.

As searchers started to look around the bodies before they were moved, they found something weird. Here's what the article described: "In a line with the heads of the dead men, and some twenty feet away from them, was a conical mound of newly-turned earth about three feet high. This was examined, with the result that the explorers were more mystified than ever. In the center of the mound, they found a curious white and polished stone, cut into a series of facets, on one of which was carved an Orthodox Greek cross. The stone was of a kind quite unknown in Baku or the district, and evidently of foreign origin." If I made this story up, you'd never believe it.

The original design of the Orthodox cross was one with equivalent sides. There are mentions in various literatures that this design was the original platform for the swastika, and some designs such as the crux gammata or cross gammadion, a name it shares with the swastika when used in heraldry. How did this stone arrive on the island? How and why was the mound of dirt uplifted? These are all million-dollar questions.

The bodies of the hunters were taken back to Baku for autopsy. The original line of thought was that the men were poisoned, died, and then lined up on the hillside with their hands over their breasts. An examination showed that the men were not poisoned. A cause of death could not be determined. The article described this event as one of the most mysterious of all time.

One of the main facts of this story that is consistent with many of the bodies found in the Missing 411 books is that a cause of death cannot be determined. Another significant point that I constantly address is the proximity to water. There are an entire series of clusters of missing people in the United States surrounding the Great Lakes and up and down the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts. In this incident the bodies are found on an island surrounded by the Caspian Sea. When you have the time, Google “Caspian Sea Mysteries.” This region of the world has a long history of highly unusual anomalies below the water and in the skies.

CONCLUSION

You've now read about 148 cases of hunters that have vanished over the course of one hundred years. The majority of these individuals were alone when they disappeared. I understand that hunting can be a sport practiced when you are alone. Many of these people seemed to vanish just after they separated from hunting partners. Many of these partners commented that it was odd that they just stopped communicating.

I want you to remember that this is not a list of all missing hunters. The cases presented here only represent ones that match our profile. Now think to yourself how many bodies of missing hunters are strewn throughout the hillsides of the world and have never been found. There are probably tens of thousands.

In my years of researching missing people, I have heard hundreds of unusual, bizarre, and out-of-this-world stories told to me by hunters and hikers deep in the woods. I have never included one of these in my books, until now.

The Predator Story

In my five previous books on the topic of missing people, I have never wandered from straight factual stories of missing people. I have never stated an opinion about what I believed is happening to the victims, and I have never o ered any theories on what may be happening on the periphery to add to the mystery.

I am going to take you through a story that involves a hunter. I wouldn't include this story in any book except for the fact that the author of the online version immediately caught my attention. The author is someone I have turned to in the past for advice on technical issues. If the author had been someone I didn't know, I would've ignored it. This author is one of the most credible people in the world. If he says something is fact, take it to the bank.

Many months before I completed this book, I was forwarded an article about a strange sighting by a bow hunter. Since I am keenly aware that bow hunters have some of the strangest disappearances I have ever documented, I started to read the article. I was almost knocked out of my chair when I read that Bruce Maccabee had prepared the report.

Many years ago I was being forwarded a series of photos of odd sightings both in the wilderness and other locations. I am keenly aware how easily it is to alter, manipulate, or manufacture a photo using a variety of software. I don't believe the authenticity of any photo or online video until it's been reviewed and analyzed by Bruce. Why Bruce?

Bruce Maccabee is an optical physicist. He has a BS degree in physics from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and an MS and PhD from American University in Washington, DC. Bruce spent a majority of his life working for the navy as a physicist. In 2008 he retired from governmental work. He has authored over a dozen technical articles and more than one hundred reports on UFO-related items. His background includes being the expert on dozens of television shows, and he is a noted author or coauthor of the following books: Could UFO's Be Real, Abduction in My Family: A Novel of Alien Encounters, UFO's Are Real: Here's the Proof,

The FBI-CIA-UFO Connection: The Hidden UFO Activities of USA Intelligence Agencies (www.brumac.8k.com). Bruce Maccabee is one of the most credible investigators in a world where I challenge almost anyone, but not him. He has shown me specifics in photos and videos that he's analyzed that have left me speechless.

The article I was given to read was authored by Bruce, which he titled, "Predator in the Forest." The facts in the story were stunning, and the analysis only added to the intrigue. Bruce never stated in the article who the hunter was that gave him the information. I first sent Bruce an e-mail and asked if he would forward me the contact information for the hunter in his article. He did one better. Bruce wrote that he never publicized the fact that the hunter was his wife, Jan. I asked if Jan would go on the record with me for my book on missing hunters. Later in the day, he said Jan would be glad to speak with me and go public with what she experienced and witnessed. We agreed on a time to talk, and I called Jan.

Jan Maccabee is the exact type of person I would expect to be a spouse to Bruce. She communicates flawlessly, is bubbly, friendly, and very easy to speak with. I explained that I had read the report and had quite a few questions about her experience. She said I could ask her anything. I asked her to speak freely and give the background on herself and what happened.

Jan grew up a tomboy. She and Bruce live on the outskirts of Lima, Ohio, approximately eighty miles southwest from Lake Erie. Jan's

main job is as a booking agent for musicians, bands, and other entertainment. She has been associated with some of the biggest bands in the world. When she isn't working, Jan has enjoyed deer hunting from a tree stand. She only hunts with a compound bow.

On September 29, 2010, she decided to take the short trip from her residence to her deer stand. She changed into her camouflaged clothing, grabbed her bow, and told Bruce where she was going and when she'd be back. Jan made her way to her blind. The seat is fifteen feet up the tree and sits in a northwest corner of wooded acreage, which is surrounded by a low density of homes and agricultural land. This is not an extremely remote area, as there is Shawnee High School about one mile north. Her stand faces east and is surrounded on every side by a thick wall of trees. You could probably see at most fifty feet into the woods from any direction.

When Jan arrived into her seat, she used her Blackberry Pearl 8130 smartphone to take a few photos of her bow in her bow hanger. Bruce noted in his report that this specific Blackberry model "records the date and time of each picture, the spatial resolution (number of pixels horizontal and vertical) and total 'byte' size of each picture file." This will have significance later.

Jan sat down in her seat at approximately 5:30 p.m. The time stamp

on the photos she took establishes this. As she was getting situated, Jan started to text a musician friend. At 6:21 p.m. Jan started to take a few photos of the ground and area around her stand. The conditions were very good as the sun was at her back, and she was facing east. It was at about this time that strangeness started to encompass the area around the stand. Jan texted her friend that the woods had all of a sudden gone silent. All noise ceased. Prior to this the birds were chirping, bugs were making sounds, and the leaves were rustling. Jan started to roll scenarios through her mind of what might be causing this. Was it some type of alpha predator approaching her stand? Was it a black panther, maybe a bear?

Jan still had her phone in her hand when she somehow became aware of something in the trees approximately fifteen to twenty feet in front of her. She described it as one of the most unusual things she's ever seen in her life. It wasn't clear; it was as though the space around it was distorted and you could almost see through it. She was fifteen feet up in her tree; the object was nearly twenty-five feet in the air in the trees across from her. She told me it reminded her of looking through a giant item wrapped in Saran Wrap. A description that Bruce used in his report that seemed appropriate was that it was like looking through a mirage on a hot road. She also said that she believed for an instant that maybe she had a floater in her eye. She explained that this idea quickly evaporated when the object moved from tree to tree. Jan was holding the Blackberry in her right hand approximately a foot and a half from her face. She pointed the phone at the object and took a photo. She thought she took the photo just after the object went to the second tree and disappeared. The photo shows otherwise. The picture was taken at 6:23 p.m.

Jan told me that she was shaken by the event and didn't quite know what to do. She took a few photos of herself immediately after the sighting and then sat in the chair for another ninety minutes and left the stand at quarter to eight and headed for home. The Maccabee's were having guests for dinner, and Jan stepped inside the house.

After dinner, Bruce and Jan watched a movie with their guests. After the guests had left, Bruce went to check his e-mail. One specific message caught his attention. After cleaning the dishes, Jan went to check her Facebook messages. One specific note caught her attention. It was from Jan's nephew, who was a student at Shawnee High School, just a mile from her deer stand. The nephew explained that they'd had band practice that night. Here is the quote from the nephew from Bruce's report: "We were playing tonight on the field, and just as it was starting to get dark, a huge bright light appears over

the field and begins to move sideways, then in a matter of five seconds or so it disappeared, getting smaller almost every second. About five minutes later it reappeared, this time it was amber in color. I know of four people who saw this, and according to an upperclassman, the same thing happened last year and they actually stopped rehearsal." Jan asked what time this had happened. He stated it was between 7:50 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Bruce later interviewed the witness and had him describe what he saw. The statement of what was observed stayed exactly like originally reported. The only additional fact was the witness saying that what was observed was not any type of aircraft they knew that existed. It reportedly looked like a big "white circle."

The information in the text message to Bruce about the light in the sky at the stadium seemed to ring with significance to Jan. She suddenly realized that she hadn't told Bruce or her guests what had happened to her in the stand. Jan explained to Bruce the details of her observation and showed him a text she had sent to her musician friend describing the silence just before she observed the distortion. Jan sent another text asking her musician friend if he still had the text sent by her when the woods went quiet. He said he would resend the text, and he did. Jan then showed Bruce the message.

The following day Jan looked at the photos she had taken and discovered that she had taken an unusual photo when she was in her stand. She showed it to Bruce and explained that this was taken while aiming toward the distortion, which she thought had already disappeared. The photo she took is attached here.

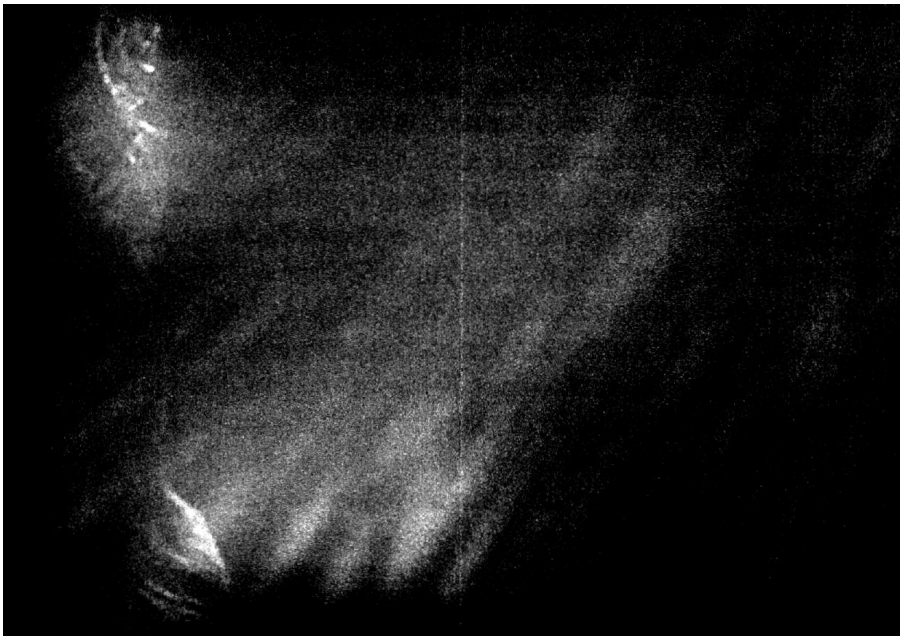


Photo of Apparent Hair

The photo shows what appears to be a blurry area of filtered light with a blond twinge of color. The far left side of the photo shows what appears to be a strand of hair extending from the top of the photo to the halfway point of the picture. Another piece of hair extends below it from the bottom of the picture to maybe a quarter of the way up. The image doesn't show any of the trees or the area that Jan believed she was photographing. This is the point where Bruce's experience kicks in; he takes the photo Jan took and describes it with technical meaning. Bruce described in his report that there are two anomalies with the photo. I'll quote him here: "First, all of the pictures were taken are at spatial resolution of 1024 pixels (horizontal) by 768 pixels (vertical), yet this single picture was taken at 528 x 400. Second, the other pictures had a 'byte' size over 200 kb whereas the size of the picture is only 43,2 kb."

I'm sure you are thinking exactly what I was at this point. How can the camera suddenly take a photo at lower resolution when it's not set at that setting?

Bruce did his research on this issue and found that this cellphone camera cannot be set at 528 x 400. Verizon confirmed this cell has no such resolution. I'm sure we have all heard a similar story at one point

or another in our lives. The issue with this incident: you have the world's premier authority of photos and videos analyzing a picture taken by someone he explicitly trusts. He knows there was no altering of this picture. So, how did a smartphone camera take a picture at a resolution that it is impossible to capture?

Maybe some of you are thinking that Jan accidentally took a photo of her own hair. That would've been impossible. She had her hair in a ponytail tucked and going through the back of her cap. Bruce determined that her hair wasn't long enough to wrap around and reach the front of the camera in the position she was holding it.

Bruce actually did a test on the phone utilizing a magnet. He placed it close to the camera to see if the pixels would be reduced and what the camera might do. When the magnet got close, the camera shut down. When the magnet was pulled away, the camera went back to normal operation. There was no e ect on the pixel ratings.

Bruce and Jan had many conversations about the distortion she saw in the trees. It reminded him of the creature that was in the trees in the movie Predator. The Maccabees got the movie and watched it, as Jan had never seen it. Jan told me that the creature that is seen in the trees in the movie was an exact match for what she also saw in the trees. It was that distorted view, like you were looking through Saran Wrap or looking through a heat mirage.

Why is Jan's story important?

The first issue for me is the timing. After reviewing over five thousand reports on missing people and writing about 1,800 cases, the predominant time people disappear is the late afternoon and early evening. Jan had her encounter at 6:23 p.m. This would be prime time for the cases I've documented. The second important point is her hunting location, a deer stand. Several years ago someone e-mailed me and requested I look into a series of unusual deer stand deaths. I spent almost a month pulling online reports on unusual deaths associated with the stands. This involved hunters that allegedly fell, got hung on their stand, and a variety of descriptions of deaths that boggled my mind. The vast majority of hunters that died in their stands were bow hunters. It was unclear to me whether the stands were inherently dangerous or something else was involved. You can go online and read about these deaths from a variety of sources.

Jan did explain that this form moved with a defined purpose from tree to tree. It wasn't floating; it was moving from one spot twenty-five

feet up in the tree to the other. This appears as though it moved with intent and intelligence. What is truly a coincidence is that I have heard similar stories from hikers over the years: seeing something in the trees that looked like the Predator movie. I put very little credibility into those incidents—that is, until I heard Jan's version. The item seen in the sky at the high school is significant. The school is approximately one mile from Jan's stand. The light in the sky was observed sometime between 7:50 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Jan's observation was at 6:23 p.m. That two of the biggest anomalies that a human life could experience occurred in that tight of a time and space continuum is far beyond mere coincidence.

Jan told me that she will never hunt that area again.

In Retrospect

After conducting the research for this book and from what I learned, even I was shocked. The number of hunters that have vanished is overwhelming. The numbers presented in the book are a small fraction of the numbers of hunters that are still missing and never have been found.

The Great Lakes region is still high on my radar. There is something about the region surrounding the lakes that has significance to the missing. If you look at our cluster map, you will see that these disappearances are in geographical clusters completely surrounding the area.

Big mountains, high elevations, and long hikes make for an obvious combination that can lead to missing people. You have none of these factors in the cases coming from New York, Michigan, or Maine. These three states have clusters of missing people who defy even the most conventional of explanations. Many of the cases associated with these locations involve elderly men that vanished and were never found. How could these elderly hunters walk out of the area and never be found? This isn't logical.

I am going to make one request from every hunter that reads this book. Please read the section on safety and commit it to memory. Save your money and purchase a personal locator beacon. There isn't one hunter in this book that thought they'd disappear and die: not one! Nobody thinks that the series of unfortunate events that took the lives of these hunters would ever happen to them. Here is a fact to ponder and something I have stated in many of the interviews I've done. I have never researched a missing person case where the victim was

carrying a firearm and a personal locator beacon. There is probably a case out there, I don't know of it.

List of Missing Hunters by Date

Name. Location Date Missing Age* Sex

Newton Graham, PA 12/02/1890 Unk.*M

Reynolds, Mack, Brown, and

Doniher, CO 10/15/1893 Unk.*M

Alexis Bork, MT 11/07/1896 Unk.*M

Richard Knight, ME 10/24/1899-1:00 p.m.* 19*M

Ray Naugle, MI 11/01/1902-p.m. 28*M

M. Krassilruko , Azerbaijan 01/11/09 Unk.*M

Harry Brownell, MI 11/09/09 23 *M

Arthur Lepusha, MI 11/14/09 Unk*M

Robert Beilby, MI 11/16/09 65*M

Orville Tuttle, MT 11/21/1910-4:00 p.m.* 23 *M

George Smith, ID 11/04/11 45 *M

Carleton Banker, NY 11/11/16- noon 56*M

George Allen, CA 10/13/1920 Unk*M

David Brown, ME 11/18/22 51*M

Mertley Johnson, ME 11/18/22 24*M

Leighton Goodell, NY 10/12/24-PM* 64*M

Martin Owensby, OR 09/16/25-PM* 50*M

Marlon or Marion Robb, UT 06/05/26 17*M

Alfred J. Bishop, VT 11/03/26 Unk*M

John Houghland, MT 11/15/26 Unk*M

Ruben Kleweno, ID 11/30/26 27*M

M.E. Felt, CA 09/16/28 79*M

August Kleist, MI 11/14/28 42*M

Mitchell Kaufman, ME 11/05/30 37*M

Julius Bakken, WA 11/09/31-noon 21*M

Paul McDowell, MI 11/14/31 22*M

Tilmon McDonald, CA 10/14/35 78*M

Luther Blanton, TX 11/18/36 57*M

John Blanton, TX 11/18/36 24*M

Raymond Maki, MI 11/27/36 17*M

Floyd Chandler, CO 10/11/37 41*M

James Mortimer, CA 10/02/38 21*M

Clarence Dorey, MT 10/16/38 24*M

Harold L. Mercer, CO 11/05/38 38*M

Jerry Hays, AZ 11/10/38 5*M

Dana Drake, ME 11/24/38 52*M

Jim McGrath, MN 06/10/40- noon 80*M

Wesley Meserole, NY 11/26/40 28*M

Luke H. Kuykendall, CA 09/16/41 65*M

Clyde Dillon, CO 10/05/41 45*M Rudolph Bertagnole, UT 10/18/43-5:00 p.m. 48*M

Carl Herrick, VT 11/23/43 37*M

Kenneth Duncan, Canada 11/27/43-3:00 p.m. 21*M

Leslie Heal, Canada 11/05/44-1:30 p.m. 26*M

Harold Dolf, PA 11/28/44 38*M

Frank Johnson, Canada 09/06/45 65*M

Middie Rivers, VT 11/12/45 75*F

A. F. Walker, WY 09/16/46 47*M

Edward Woelfle, WI 10/06/46 15*M

Joe Blackburn, WA 11/01/46 34*M

Dominique Danis, Canada 11/23/47- 12:30 p.m. 52*M

Judd McWilliams, ID 09/15/48 82*M

H. B. Davis, MT 10/08/48 72*M

F. Hale Currier, MI 10/17/48 53*M

Robert Lapine, MI 11/19/48, 2:00p.m. 16*M

Jack Leichtman, WI/MI 11/21/48 22*M

Frank Norris, WY 09/21/49 46*M

Eddie Grant, ID 10/05/49 22*M

Donald McDonald, WA 12/15/49 17*M

Lester Barger, OR 10/15/50 67*M

J. D. Stewart, AZ 10/27/50 70*M

Freida Langer, VT 10/28/50 53*F

Mary Winkley, MT 10/31/50 40*F

Elmer Mikus, MT 11/09/50 62*M

Raymond Dolliver, ME 11/18/50 17*M

Evo Recchia, ME 11/20/50 23*M

George Franks, PA 12/04/50, 1:00 p.m. 20*M

Roy Agee, ID 10/01/51, 4:00 p.m. 63*M

Bryan Warner, ID 10/01/51 UNK*M

Bobby Boatman, WA 10/14/51 14*M

James Wishart, MT 10/19/51 21*M John Young, UT 10/26/51 24*M

Ralph Savaglio, IL 10/27/51-5:00 p.m. 19«M

Thomas Inman, IL 10/27/51-5:00 p.m. 27«M

William Brown, IL 10/27/51-5:00 p.m. 3bM

Robert Sawyer, IL 10/28/51-2:00 a.m. 20«M

Max Wage, IL 10/28/51-2:00 a.m. 26«M

James Madison, ID 09/11/52- 6:00 p.m. 67«M

Sam Gray, AZ 11/15/52 31«M

Walter Anderson, MN 09/19/53-Noon 5bM

R. W Jacobson, CA 10/18/53 34«M

Charles Warner, OR 11/21/53 40«M

Lemar Pepmuller, ID 11/21/53 22«M

Charles Miller, ID 10/10/54 25«M

Donald Pack, UT 10/26/55 19«M

Eugene Loughlin, Canada 11/12/55-4:00 p.m. 62*M

Walter Kline, MI 11/15/55-7:00 a.m. 52«M

Ronald Hu ord, ID 10/01/56 28«M

Norris Head, CO 10/29/56 26«M

Paul Bell, NY 11/01/56 26*M

Jim Eaton, WA 11/26/56 74«M

Louis H. Teller, NM 11/06/57 30«M

Carl D. Ross, VT 11/17/57 27«M

Ray Carothers, WI 11/18/57-1:00 p.m. 69«M

Lawrence Eugene Prange, MT 08/14/58 20«M

Ellison Flowers, CA 09/23/58 26«M

Alex Thorne, Canada 10/04/58 44«M

Sam Adams, MT 10/27/58 39«M

Ted Nalman, ID 09/07/59 14«M

Meryl Newcombe, Canada 10/29/59 50«M

George Weeden, Canada 10/29/59 63«M

Arthur Dillon Jordan, MT 11/08/59 59«M Fred Vinneau, ID 10/06/60 84«M

Fritz Frey, MT 11/14/60 65«M

Fred Dorsey, ID 10/21/61 19«M

Delmar Berg, MT 10/21/61 27«M

James McCormick, OR 12/05/61 16«M

Frank Brentano, OR 10/07/62 60«

Virgil Mulck, ID 10/24/62 55-

Wallace Marr, Canada 11/19/62 30«

Martin Woodward, ID 11/17/63-2:00 p.m. 22«

Wagner Robinson, WA 11/13/65 28«

Leonard Vacknitz, WA 11/18/65-3:00 p.m. 43«

Tom Garafalo, WY 11/25/65 28«

Anthony Granata, AK 08/18/66 31«

Arthur Norburg, WA 12/05/66 35«

John Stratton, WA 10/18/67 79«

Lowell Smith, ID 10/05/68 60«

Edward Weibert, NV 11/10/68-A.M. 71«

Robert Winters, OR 10/08/69 78«

Joseph Allevato, NY 11/06/71, 5:00 p.m. 74«

James Annis, WA 11/13/71 16«

Lawrence Wright, WV 11/24/71 54«

George Bombardier, NY 11/29/71,5:00 p.m. 55«

Elizabeth Kant, Canada 10/16/72 45«

Thomas Seager, CA 10/07/73 33«

Jimmy Du y, WA 10/19/73 2ˆ

Jack Scane, CA 10/22/73 54«

Joseph Kalaszewski, WY 10/24/73 45«

James Howard, NY 11/23/73,9:00 p.m. 19«

Bernard Orpustan, CA 12/23/73-2:30 p.m. 31«

James Miller, Canada 09/22/74 42«

Eddie Nichols, KY 12/03/74 21« Timothy Shear, MT 11/23/75 22«

Ludger Belanger, ME 11/25/75 25«

Samuel Ipock, OR 10/10/77-5:00 p.m. 22«

Janice Okeson, CO 11/06/77 21«

Larry Wyco , MI 11/25/77- noon 15«

Fred Van Dufelen, Canada 12/17/78 26«

Joe Pfost, WY 10/28/79-9:00 p.m. 62«

Walter Mitchell, LA 01/01/81 23«

Wurran, Canada 09/13/81 3«F

James Schroeder, ID 09/25/82-3:00 p.m. 23«

Tracy Cray, MT 02/13/83-4:00 p.m. 26*

22 2222^222222222^2^22222222222222222

Emerson Carbaugh, PA 01/11/85 64-M

William R. Lyons, CO

10/11/86 5bM

Michael Henley Jr., NM 04/21/88 9'M

Oscar Hintta, MI 11/16/88-4:30 p.m. 65«M

Wally Finnegan, Canada 11/04/89 5bM

Susan Seymour Adams, ID 09/30/90 42«F

Brian Sines, ID 11/22/91 29-M

Corey Fay, OR 11/23/91 17*M

Raymond Krieger, Canada 08/28/92-9:00 p.m. 48«M

George Woltjen, NY (10/24/92 60'M

Fortunato Rivera, ME 11/13/93-10:00 a.m. 79'M

Jeremiah Harris, IA 12/04/93 18-M

Rhonda Runningbird,

Canada 03/26/95 25*F

Richard Bendele, ID 11/17/96-6:00 p.m. 29*M

David Skaggs, MO 11/24/96-9:00 a.m. 55«M

Robert Smith, ME 11/18/97 70*M

Raymond Matlock, WA 11/07/98 28«M

Jerry Lee McKoen, CA 09/21/2002 48'M Jimmy Rambone Jr., Canada 09/03/2003- 3:00 p.m. 5bM

Chuck Logan, GA 12/20/2003- 2:00 p.m. 4bM

Bart Schleyer, Canada 09/14/2004 49«M .

Robert Springfield, MT 09/19/2004 49*M

Jeromy Childress, OR 10/17/2004-4:30 p.m. 3bM

Charles Hu , FL 11/24/2004-6:00 p.m. 76*M

Tom Howell, Canada 09/12/2005 46«M

Tom Leonard, Canada 10/02/2005 40*M

Patrick Chambers, AK 08/03/2006-9:00 a.m. 54’M

Charles Gustafson, WY 10/11/2006-6:30 a.m. 72«M

Kory Kelly, MN 10/16/2006 38*M

Mark Perri, NY 10/20/2006 39*M

Ronald S. Gray, ID 09/19/2008 62«M

Robert Willis, CA 10/31/2008 38«M

Melvin Nadel, NM 09/06/2009 6bM

Clinton Jason Daines, UT 10/16/2009 35«M

Harris Hill, NS 11/10/2010-1:00 p.m. 87*M

David Prideaux, Australia 06/05/2011-4:30 p.m. 50*M

William Oberkiser, Canada 10/09/2011 65*M

Steve Litsey, OR 10/29/2011 7bM

Raymond Salmen, Canada 05/28/2013 65 *M

Barnett Zeldin, NJ 10/07/2013 74«M

Eric Smith, VA 11/08/2013-10:00 a.m. 4bM

Aaron Hedges, MT 09/07/2014 38’M

Richard Harkins, CO 09/07/2015 43’M

Barry Harmon, AR 11/06/2015 35‘M

Thomas Messick, NY 11/15/2015-2:00 p.m. 82'M

Chris Stasiak, IL 01/11/2016-1:00 p.m. 44«M

Connie Johnson, ID 10/05/18 76‘F

Terrence Woods, ID 10/05/18 26*M Terry Meador, WY 10/25/18 74*M

Total Cases: 193

Females 8

Males 185

Most Disappearances by Year

1950: 8

1948:5

1938:5

1909:4

1957:3

1958:4

1959:4

2004:4

2006:4

Disappearance by Month

January: 4

February: 1

March: 1

April: 1

May: 1

June: 3

July: 0

August: 4

September: 22

October: 66

November: 79

December: 10

Total: 193

Countries Disappearances United States Canada 171 19

Australia Azerbaijan

3

1

Anomalies

Bow Hunters

Bart Schleyer 9/14/2004, YT

Robert Springfield 9/19/2004, MT

Two of the strangest cases in this book occurred five days apart. Both men were bow hunters, and the circumstances of their death have never been explained. Both men were forty- nine years old. Very odd.

Females

Freida Langer 10/28/50, VT

Mary Winkley 10/31 /50, MT

There are only eight females on the master list. 128 years of cases, what are the odds that 2 of 8 women disappear within 3 days of each other?

Geographical and Date Clusters

Maine

Raymond Dolliver 11/18/50 17*M

Evo Recchia 11/20/50 23*M

It seems unusual that two very young men would disappear within two days of each other, and both disappeared in Maine.

Michigan

Harry Brownell 11/09/2009 23-M

Arthur Lepusha 11/14/2009 Unk.*M

Robert Beilby 11/16/2009 65*M

Three hunters went missing in the same state within seven days.

ID/OR

Brian Sines, ID 11/22/91 29« M

Corey Fay, OR 11/23/91 17«M

Two young men vanished within two days of each other in bordering states.

Two Hunters Went Missing on the Same Day: Pair#l

Roy Agee, ID 10/01/51 63«M

Bryan Warner, ID 10/01/51 Unk»M

Pair #2

Charles Warner, OR 11/21/53 40«M

Lemar Pepmuller, ID 11/21/53 22»M

Pair #3

Meryl Newcombe, Canada 10/29/59 50*M

George Weeden, Canada 10/29/59 63«M

Pair#4

Connie Johnson, ID 10/05/18 76»F

Terrence Woods, ID 10/05/18 26«M

**Of the eight people that all disappeared on the same day, five vanished in Idaho, I find this an amazing fact.

46:2 47:

1

48: 3

49:2

50: 3 51:

5

52: 3

53:2

54:3

55:3

56: 1

57: 1

58:0

59: 1

60:3

Ages: Numbers of People 2:1 3: 1 61: 1

4:0 5: 1 6:0 7:0 8:0 9: 1 10:0 11:0 62:4 63:

12:0 13:0 14:2 15:2 16:3 17: 5 18: 1 2 64:2

19: 5 20: 3 21: 6 65:7

22: 7 66:0

23: 5 67:2

24:4 68:0

25:3 69: 1

26: 8 70:2

27:4 71:2

28:6 72:2

29:2 73:0

30:2 74:4

31:5 75: 1

32:0 76:2

33: 1 77:0

34:2 78:2

35:3 79:3

36:0 80: 1

37:2 81:0

38: 5 82:2

39:2 83:0

40:3 84: 1

41:3 85:0

42:3 86:0

43:2 87: 1

44:2

45:5

There are four ages of missing hunters that lead all others:

26 years: 8 missing

22 years: 7 missing

65 years: 7 missing

28 years: 6 missing

States with the Highest Number of Missing Cases

State/Province Number of Missing

Idaho 23

Montana 17

Michigan 13

State/Province Number of Missing

Idaho 23

Montana 17

Michigan 13

Washington 12

California 12

Colorado 11

Maine 10

Oregon 10

New York 10

Safety Issues

You don’t read much about safety gear that hikers and hunters should be carrying. Maybe the rifle and clothing manufacturers don’t want excess money spent on gear that they don’t sell. The truth is that just a couple of the items listed below, if carried by these outdoorsmen, may have saved as many as 95 percent of the lives I list in the books. Imagine that you are a spouse of one of these outdoorsmen, and you could spend a few hundred dollars to guarantee they came home at the end of their trip. I know that most hunters are manly men with lots of testosterone and sometimes a bold-headed approach to the forest; the reality is they can stu one of these items into their pocket and never have to tell their partners. Think of it as an inexpensive life insurance policy.

I'm not a proponent of any specific brand of anything I list. I want you to read the online reviews of the products. You may want to call the company's customer-service number and ensure all of your concerns are answered adequately.

Be smart about your purchase. Do your homework on the specific unit you wish to purchase, and then go online and competitively shop to get the best price.

GPS Device

This is a handy product to carry. When you get it, ensure that you have someone who is familiar with the item explain it in detail and that the maps you needed are loaded on it. These only work when you have a direct line of sight to the sky. They won't work under a heavy canopy of trees or in caves. You need to decide if you want one that is waterproof and shockproof. There are even devices that you strap on the outside of your pack, and it emits a signal every few minutes. Friends and family can download the company's software, and you can track your friend's progress as they make their way through the woods. This is not a safety beacon as is described below.

Cost: $75—$450

Map

Always carry a map of the area you are entering. GPS devices sometimes fail; batteries go dead, and you may drop and break it. A hard copy of a map is always the best backup option. You may want to get it sealed in plastic, so inclement weather doesn't destroy it.

Cost: $ 10-820

Personal Locator Beacon

These could possibly have saved 95 percent of all hunters who disappeared or died in this book. It works o satellites and is managed by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the US government. Once you get the item, you will register it with NOAA. In an emergency, you activate the transponder. It sends a signal to the satellite, saying that you need assistance. NOAA contacts the law enforcement or search-and-rescue agency for the area of the signal, and they respond. There are many variables in this product: waterproof, shock proof, small sizes, and so forth. It is reported that most SAR groups can get within ten feet of the GPS coordinates given to them by NOAA. This is a must-have item.

Cost: $200-8450

Satellite Phone (SAT)

There are a few SAT phones that have an emergency locator beacon built into the device. I carry one. This is one of the times you don't want to purchase on the cheap. Spend the extra money and get one of quality. Some phones don't have good reception. That will not help you. The best reception for all GPS/SAT-related devices is from a mountain or hilltop.

Cost: 8600-81500

Cell Phone

Take your cell phone on every hike. You'd be surprised where it may sometimes work. Don't count on it to be functional where you are traveling. Just take it as a cheap and marginal insurance policy. The phone will have application options that may be utilized should you get lost (flashlight, etc.). Make sure your cell is fully charged before going out.

Cost: $200-$1000

Whistle

This is the cheap alternative to the locator beacon. Most people will hear a whistle over a greater distance than someone yelling for assistance. These are very inexpensive.

Cost: $3

Discuss Hike with Family and Friends

Tell friends exactly where you are planning to go, when you are going in, and when you will be coming out. Telling friends where you are going costs nothing. A quick e-mail or text telling a friend or loved one exactly where you'll be in the woods can easily save your life. Make sure you are telling someone that is responsible and will follow up.

Cost: Nothing

Travel in Pairs The vast majority of people in my books disappear when they are alone. Always travel in pairs.

Cost: Nothing

Take Extra Batteries

It's a fact that batteries fail. Always carry backups and exchange them regularly.

Cost: $7—$15

Emergency Blanket

Outdoor stores sell a variety of emergency blankets. These are inexpensive and will surely save your life if you are faced with inclement weather or spending the night in the woods under unexpected conditions. You can purchase safety blankets that are the size of a large cell phone and are very light.

Cost: $5-$20

Extra Water and Energy Bars

This is a no-brainer. Taking extra water and energy bars of your choice is something that should be done on any outdoor adventure. You might also want to invest in a water filtration system. These are the size of a co ee cup and could save you from a nasty case of giardia.

Cost: $5-$10

Firearms: Extra Rounds

This can be a sensitive topic to some people. If you are trained and comfortable and licensed to carry a concealed weapon, always take a firearm and extra ammunition. If you are lost and you know people would be looking for you, firing three rounds will indicate to searchers where you are located. If after an extended period of time you hear three rounds again, you again fire three rounds, and this will help them locate you. Always get trained by a professional before taking it into the woods. Never fire rounds into the air. Fire rounds into a log.

Cost: Variable depending on equipment

Weather

This is one of the most important factors to check before leaving for your trip. It is one of the least expensive items to obtain. I recommend downloading a weather application on your phone and checking it before you leave for the backcountry. I cannot tell you the number of

times that hunters and hikers have lost their lives because they never checked the weather just before they left. Weather in the mountains can change drastically in a short period of time.

Hunting Partner

While this may be minimized by many, this may be the most important safety choice you make. I can remember the first time I went hunting. I looked for the most experienced, smartest, and most safety-conscious hunter I knew to be my partner; that man taught me a lot.

You may be miles into the forest and days from any assistance from SAR teams. Your partner might be your lifeline and the hinge on whether you live or die. This person should be in good physical condition and treat your life with as much respect as his or hers. I have been around hunters who drank alcohol during short breaks in their hunting day. I saw this once and never went with that group again. Alcohol takes away your energy, warps your perception and judgment, and slows your reactions. Alcohol and hunting do not mix. Do not associate with other hunters who are drinking just before they head out to hunt.

Know Your Target

Never shoot at anything unless you are absolutely positive you know what you are aiming at. Don't ever shoot blindly into bushes or trees, and know what is in the area behind your target.

Contact me anytime at missing411@yahoo.com

Cut this page out of the book and post it where you won't miss it before you head out the door:

GPS Device

Satellite Phone

Personal Locator Beacon

Cell Phone

Take Extra Batteries

Map

Whistle

Advise Family and Friends

Travel in Pairs

Emergency Blanket

Extra Water and Energy Bars Firearm and Extra Rounds Check the Weather

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MISSING 411 OVERVIEW

Missing 411: The Hunted

Our second movie based on the 411 books.

It highlights a series of hunters that disappeared, many of the stories were in this book.

You can purchase this on DVD directly from: www.canammissing. com

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Missing 411: Western United States

The eastern and western US books were originally one book. They were split and published as two books that were released one month apart.

Published: February 2,2012

367 pages

Covers the western United States and Canada

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Missing 411: Eastern United States

Published: March 6, 2012

358 pages

Covers the eastern United States

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Missing 411: North America and Beyond

Published: February 28, 2013

488 pages

New stories of missing people from the United States, Canada, Australia, England, France, Iceland, and Indonesia

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Missing 411: The Devil's in the Detail

Published: April 18, 2014

446 pages

New stories from the United States, Canada, Australia, Borneo, Ecuador, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Switzerland, and Austria. There is an extensive analysis in the back of the book of cases from the first four books, including statistics.

Missing 411: A Sobering Coincidence

Published: July 22, 2015

398 pages

This book exposes an entirely new set of unusual disappearances associated with young men found in bodies of water. Cases are documented from the United States, Canada, France, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

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Missing 411: O the Grid

Published: September 16, 2017

401 Pages

Entirely new stories from the United States, Canada, and six other countries. Tables, lists, and analysis from past books are in the conclusions. Statements from SAR personnel are highlighted.

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Missing 411: LAW

Published: May 2018

375 Pages

A new spoke in the investigational wheel as disappearances involving aircraft are presented. There is also a large section of conventional land cases and people who vanished related to water.

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Missing 411: The Movie

Released: May 7, 2017

The story of five children who vanished in the wilderness. Footage from national parks, forests, and rural areas. Former Los Angeles Magazine and NBC movie critic John Barbour rated this the #1 documentary of 2017. Available on DVD and Blu-ray through our website, or online at iTunes and Amazon.com.

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All items are available online from our website. We do not sell on Amazon or any other online service. All books are $24.99 plus shipping and handling directly from our website store. We do ship internationally.

www.canammissing.com